BX 6793
.T3 E4
Copy 1

BX 6793
.T3 E4

Class BX6793
Book .T3E4

10771

Benjamin Taylor.

MEMOIR

OF

ELDER BENJAMIN TAYLOR,

A Minister of the Christian Connexion,

AND

PASTOR OF THE BETHEL CHURCH

IN PROVIDENCE, R. I.

BY E. EDMUNDS,
PASTOR OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SUMMER ST., BOSTON.

"Lives of sainted ones remind us
We can make our lives sublime—
And, departing, leave behind us
Footsteps on the sands of time;
Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again."

BOSTON:
GEORGE W. WHITE, PRINTER,
SCOLLAY'S BUILDING, COURT STREET.
1850.

BX6793
.T3E4

333825
24

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

An account of his birth and family. His conversion. His voyages to sea. Call to the ministry, . . . 7

CHAPTER II.

Commencement of preaching. Ordination. Marriage. A testimony of forty years acquaintance, . . . 20

CHAPTER III.

Study. Difficulties. Improvement. Duty of ministers to improve all their powers. Plain preaching, . . 35

CHAPTER IV.

Preaching in Taunton and Providence. Removal to Swansey. Two Baptist churches, ... 41

CHAPTER V.

Labors in Swansey continued. Revival of two years. Many baptized. His support. Friendly intercourse with others. Visiting the sick. How to find Christ, . 48

CHAPTER VI.

He is chosen representative. Duty of minister to government. Love of children. The ministry his great theme. At his brother's ordination. Loses a child, . 60

CHAPTER VII.

Preaches in Fall River. Visit to the West. Moves to Michigan. Indians. Travels and preaches. Sickness. Visits New England. Preaches in Providence. Becomes Bethel preacher, ... 66

CHAPTER VIII.

Reports, ... 77

CHAPTER IX.

Decline of health. Journey west. The dropsy. Joys of home. His death. Reflections, ... 94

CHAPTER X.

Reflections on his life, character and ministry. Lines on his cenotaph, ... 104

CHAPTER XI.

Letters from Elders E. Shaw, M. How, M. Fernald, William Taylor, and Brother J. G. Loring. Extract from a sermon by G. W. Kilton. Obituary notices, . . 119

CHAPTER XII.

The calling of seamen honorable. Their conversion. Their value to the world. Poetry. The doctrine of the Lord, 133

PREFACE.

In accordance with the suggestions of the many friends of Elder Taylor, the following Memoir of his life and ministry is now presented to the public. It was at first intended to give merely a brief sketch in pamphlet form; but subsequent reflection and the judgment of others who are interested in the subject, led to the conclusion that a more extended history of this excellent man should be given.

As he left no journal or written sermons from which to draw materials of interest for these pages—with the exception of Bethel reports, records of marriages, funerals, and baptisms—it became necessary to seek out such reminiscences of him as had been treasured in the recollections of the living who were the subjects of his personal labors, and of brethren in the ministry who had long been intimate with him.

After much labor and research, all which I have been able to procure is laid before the reader in the following pages. I acknowledge much assistance

from the friends, and especially the widow of our deceased brother, who have cordially aided me in my endeavors, affording every facility in their power to enable me to present as full a biography of Elder Taylor as the circumstances would admit. It is to be regretted that a more copious account of the inner life, the soul's history, its struggles with temptation, difficulties, its progress and victories, could not have been furnished. A diary would have supplied this lack; though even now, no small indication of these may be gathered from the history of the outward life, zealous and indefatigable labors in advancing the Redeemer's kingdom in the world.

Hoping that this Memoir may answer, in some humble degree, the wishes of the numerous friends of our brother, and be a record of the virtues of one

"On earth beloved,—
In heaven remembered still,"

it is given, with the desire that it may be received with favor, and help to perpetuate the memory of the good on earth.

E. Edmunds.

Boston, February, 1850.

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

An account of his birth—Family—His conversion—Voyages to sea—Call to the ministry.

Benjamin, the second son of James and Anna Taylor, was born in Beverly, Massachusetts; July 22d, 1786. His parents had a family of fourteen children, twelve of whom lived to grow up and be settled in life. Of nine sons, four became preachers, three in the Christian Connexion, and one in the Baptist. A daughter also married a minister; and a grandson studied with a view to the ministry, but died before completing his education.

Of the parents we are informed, they both professed religion and joined the Baptist Church in Sutton, N. H., whither they moved while Benjamin was young. Subsequently on removing to Salem, Massachusetts, they became members of the Christian Church in that place, under the care of Elder Jones. They were pious, exemplary people, and are still spoken of with respect and affection by brethren who knew them forty years ago. The father deceased

May 30, 1811, aged forty-six years—before his departure, he requested that devout men, as in the case of Stephen, might carry him to his burial. The mother is still living (January, 1850), with her son Elder James Taylor, in Rhode Island, at the advanced age of eighty-three years. Her devotion and piety was of that character that she never took up her children to feed them even, without secretly asking the blessing of God upon them.

Of the childhood and early life of Benjamin, the subject of this Memoir, the eldest brother, William,* writes me as follows:—"Benjamin and myself were born in Beverly, Massachusetts. The first recollection I have concerning him, is connected with the following circumstance. There was a well in the back part of my father's house, into which Benjamin fell, the curb being low, when about two years old. The well was some twenty feet deep, but he being thickly clad, laid upon the surface of the water which was several feet deep, until a man was sent for half a mile distant who went down with a rope, by which Benjamin was drawn out unhurt excepting a small fracture of the skin on his forehead. Four or five years after this, my father moved from Beverly to Londonderry, N. H., and from here to Warren, and soon after to Sutton, at which place for the most part he brought up his family. Benjamin, so far as I know, previous to his religious impressions, was

* He is a useful and respected Baptist minister, in the State of Michigan.

well disposed towards religious things—and was remarkable for his decision of character. He had nothing more than a common school education—and when not at school labored with my father on the farm.

"In the summer of 1802 there was a revival of religion under the labors of a licentiate by the name of Applebee, of the Free Will Baptists, and my brother Benjamin, when about sixteen years of age, was the first who came out openly on the Lord's side. He immediately took an active part in religious meetings—and it was soon discovered that he had speaking talents. The impression soon became general that he would, as the expression was at that day, have to preach. In the fall of 1802 my father, mother, Benjamin and myself, were all baptized at the same time, by an Elder Webster, from Vermont. We all united with the Baptist Church in Sutton, excepting my brother, who had some difficulty in his mind with regard to the doctrine of election as then held by that Church. He consequently never united with that Church, nor to my knowledge with any other, till after he left going to sea. He however continued to exhort in the meetings and seemed to enjoy religion for sometime. At length he declined in his religious fervor, and began to neglect his duty, immediately upon which he became very melancholy and retiring. He would often absent himself from all company, and repair to some remote place or part of the house, wrap himself in bedclothes and lay and groan half a day at a time—and when any

one inquired the cause of his trouble, he would make little or no reply. After being exercised in this way for sometime, his troubles seemed to wear away and he became still more neglectful of religious duties, and finally attended balls and parties of pleasure, trying at the same time to make himself believe that all was well, and that all men would at last be saved; yet he would often betray a want of confidence in this, and show plainly that his mind was not at rest.

"In 1804, as nearly as I can now recollect, my father removed from Sutton, back to Beverly, with all his family excepting myself and a sister. Benjamin remained with the family in Beverly perhaps two years or more, when my father again moved and settled in Salem, a short distance only from Beverly, and fifteen miles from Boston. My brother now went to sea, and I think made his first voyage without much trouble. His second voyage was to France, and while there an embargo was laid on all American vessels in port. They were in Bayonne, and detained there I think eleven months*.

* At the time of his going to sea, Napoleon Bonaparte was in his glory, and pushing his victorious arms from city to city, and from nation to nation. Nearly every power in Europe was at war with France, and terror-stricken at the success of her arms. During Benjamin's detention in France, he saw Bonaparte a number of times, and often referred to it in his preaching afterward. Once he saw him reviewing his army with great care and interest which he described, as being a very imposing sight. At another time in Bayonne, a town near to the border of Spain, he saw Bonaparte and Josephine his wife in familiar conver-

They were at length discharged, and on their passage home came near being lost. By bad weather and head winds their voyage was protracted, so that they were put on short allowance for sometime. Once their vessel was thrown on her beam ends and they all expected to go to the bottom, but she righted again, and after a tedious voyage they arrived safe in port.

"I do not know that my brother's mind was very much exercised on religious subjects from the time that his religious feelings declined until his troubles during this voyage. I did not however often see him after he left Sutton, but have heard him speak of his feelings while in France, and on his way home, that he felt as did Jonah when 'the billows and waves passed over him.' His afflictions, however, were sanctified to him, and soon after his return he resum-

sation. It would appear that they had met after a short absence, and were in earnest conversation in regard to the conquest of Spain, as a short time after that he placed Joseph Bonaparte his brother, on the Spanish throne. It might be observed here, that Josephine is said to have been of signal service to Napoleon in laying out and executing his loftiest plans of war and conquest. His great success is said also to have been owing as much to *her* enlarged and clear views of action, as to *his* unexampled skill and valor. And when in after time he was about to divorce her, from motive of policy, she took him to a window and pointing to a star in the heavens brighter than the rest, said "that star is mine—and like that, united we stand, but divided we fall." But he whose heart was already calloused with war and crime, still persisted, and left the amiable Josephine for the embrace of another. His hastening ruin and final overthrow show how true were the words spoken by one who loved.

ed his religious profession, and commenced preaching."

At the time that Benjamin declined from the ways of religion, we learn from various sources, it was almost entirely owing to his trials about preaching, and the opposition which he felt in his mind to it. Soon after he experienced religion, he believed God called him to preach; but being young, with very limited education, and diffident withal, he saw not how he could obey this command. He however loved God, delighted in his service, and desired to do his will, but to go forth in preaching the gospel, seemed to him an impossibility. He very justly felt his own insufficiency for this work, but did not see that "God could choose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and weak things to confound the things which are mighty;" and that he doth "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings perfect praise." Could he have seen this, and that God often calls men into the ministry with a view that that call shall lead them to a preparation for, as well as to the ministry itself, which is evidently the case, it would have been a great relief, as well as benefit to his mind. Or, on the other hand, had he decided in regard to preaching like this: "I will try to do my duty to-day and trust God for grace to do it to-morrow; I will speak and pray in public and private, doing all I can for the glory of God and the salvation of men — and then if in after time, I find it my duty to preach, or if my exhortations grow into preaching, well and good. At all events I will go forward in doing

what I believe to be the will of God *now*, and to-morrow must take thought for itself." Had he taken this view of his duty, and gone forward in this way, he doubtless would have been preserved from falling, even from the commencement of his Christian course. But so he did not, and so many before and since have not done; but it is hoped the relation of his experience will help to guide others who may read these pages, in a more consistent course and obedient path of duty.

The great difficulty with many persons is, they look at the duties of a whole life as if they were to be done in a day, and thus become discouraged — when, if they remembered that each duty has a space allotted for its performance, together with a precious promise, "my grace is sufficient for thee," they would press forward with a cheerful courage. If a man have a hundred miles to walk, he has only to take a step at a time, to accomplish the whole, which, in due time, is as easily done as if it were but one mile. Therefore we should go forward, step by step, and moment by moment, till all life's duties are accomplished. Had Sabbath schools been in operation then, as now, they doubtless would have been of great service to him in opening a field for Christian labor, and useful means of preparation for that higher and more responsible work of preaching the gospel in after time. As this was not the case, he then saw no other way before him, but either to commence preaching immediately, or to withhold his public testimony in speaking, and endeavor to pursue a medium

and retired Christian life. The former he thought he could not possibly do, and in attempting the latter, he fell into that state of religious decline and melancholy to which the reader has been referred.

How natural that in smothering the fire, it should go out, that in withholding more than is meet, it should tend to poverty. As in the natural, so in the spiritual world — the fire of divine love in the soul struggles for utterance, but if buried and stifled too long, languishes and dies. "No man lighteth a candle and putteth it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house." How many young men, like our brother, have felt this same call, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," but have shrunk from bearing the cross, and sought "to climb up some other way;" in doing which they have ceased to follow Christ, "left their first love," and brought darkness and doubt upon their minds. How pertinent are the words of the Saviour to such, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."

It was while in this state of mind that he gave back in his zeal for God and fell from his steadfastness in Christ, and it was during these impressions he resolved on going to sea. His wife writes me of these early exercises, "the cry still followed him wherever he went, sounding in his ears, 'woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' He went to sea with the hope of finding peace of mind, but in this was mistaken; and after following the seas for two or three

years, and undergoing many hardships, he returned to his native land, some in debt, and firmly convinced that he must preach the gospel at the loss of all things."

His sea-faring life, however, prepared him as in a furnace, to endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, and especially to labor so successfully for seamen as he did in the last years of his life. On returning from sea, he found in Salem a company of brethren in whom he was greatly interested. The preacher was none other than the lamented Elder Abner Jones,* who had commenced holding meetings in this ancient town some time before, and had gathered a small church. He was at once drawn to them in spirit and love. On attending their meetings, he felt that this was just such a people as he desired to find at the commencement of his Christian life. Their religious views, their manner of worship, their zeal, spirit, freedom and love, seemed so like the apostolic church, that he longed to be joined with them in "an everlasting covenant not to be forgotten." He now had mingled feelings of sorrow and joy — of sorrow that he had so far wandered from God — of joy that he found a people to whom his heart was drawn in tender affection. During a prayer meeting one evening, he arose and confessed his backsliding, and requested the people "to pray for him, that the Prodigal son

* He was the first minister in New England that came out on the free principles of the Christian Connexion. A brief account of him may be found appended.

might be restored to his father's house." The request was heard and granted, by Him who "giveth strength to the faint," and once more he walked forth in the light of the Lord. He soon became acquainted with Elder Jones, conversed freely with him in regard to his trials about preaching, and received from him much good counsel and encouragement. He then decided to join the church, and was received a member some time in 1809, when about twenty-three years of age.

He now spoke and prayed in the social meetings, read the word of God, and meditated thereon day and night. But even now, at times, the thought of preaching so overcame him that he was much depressed in spirit. About this time he conceived a new plan of doing his duty, which was by proxy, and perhaps do it better than in any other way — that if God would send some other one better qualified, in his stead, he would give a large portion of his future earnings to support him in the work. And upon this plan he asked God to accept his offering and future service. But God did not see fit to call in a worm of the dust to sit in counsel with the Infinite Jehovah — or suffer man to make plans for God to act upon.

After pondering these things over with deep anxiety of heart, and asking, but in vain, for light and evidence of his acceptance on this ground, his mind finally rested upon these words: "What is that to thee, follow *thou* me." These words of the Saviour penetrated his very soul — they at once demolished

his air-built castle, and like Noah's dove, he found no resting place for the sole of his foot, but in returning to the ark of the Lord and giving himself up anew to be directed and guided by Him. He found, indeed, that "it was not in man to direct his steps."

He then asked only one evidence more, and that was, if some person, entirely unacquainted with his case should come to him, as Ananias went to Saul, and declare God's will to him concerning his duty in this thing, he would believe that it was not a vision of his own, but a call from God. This was so signally verified to his mind a few days after, that, like Moses, he exclaimed, "Lord, send by whom thou wilt send." It was but a few days after this, before the way opened for him to go forth and prove what the Lord would do for him, and through him, while attempting to speak in his name.

To some, these trials with regard to preaching will appear singular, but it should be remembered that many eminent and useful preachers have passed through similar conflicts; nor was our Lord himself wholly exempted therefrom, as his temptation in the wilderness abundantly proves. To those who enter the ministry more for a profession and livelihood, than from a sense of duty and as a call from God, these things will seem strange indeed; but it is written, "the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him," but they are none the less real to him that is exercised thereby, on that account. Hear the language of Moses when God called

him to go down into Egypt to deliver his people: "O Lord, who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, to bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." And the Lord said unto him, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or the deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." And he said, "O my Lord, send by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." Isaiah also exclaims, "I am a man of unclean lips"—and a live coal was laid upon his mouth and made to touch his lips, that he might be purged and prepared for his work. The apostle Paul asks, "who is sufficient for these things?" His answer is, "our sufficiency is of God; who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the spirit. I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengtheneth me."

Many, however, obey this call at once, and cheerfully, "thanking God that he hath counted them faithful, putting them into the ministry." This is right, inasmuch as "God loves the cheerful giver," and hath said—"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Yet, not a few, like our brother, think it must be they are mistaken, in regard to their impressions to preach, because they feel so unworthy and every way unqualified for it; and hence, like Gideon of old, desire to have the

fleece wet with the dews of heaven at one time, and dry at another, that they may be sure that God is in it, and they are not deceived.

We may know a man is called of God to preach, when his gift, his life and his labors lead men to fear, love and serve God — when his teaching interests and confirms minds in the truth — when they bear the fruits of the Spirit, turning men from sin to righteousness, as God said to the prophet, "if they had stood in my counsel and had caused the people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings." When their preaching, like the apostle's, "turns men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God," then we may know they are sent of God; for "by their fruits ye shall know them" — and by our fruit we may know ourselves to a great extent.

This power to persuade, to instruct, to convince, to turn men to the right, is a power from God, a gift for the ministry of his word. "Those things that thou hast heard of me," said Paul to Timothy, "commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." The parable of the two *unlike* sons, Mat. 21: 28, 34, shows how readily some engage to serve God, but do not fulfil their vows — and also how others who at first say I will not go, afterwards repent and obey. An aged minister said to me, "I never knew any one to come into the ministry more reluctantly than did Elder Taylor, but after he had, I never knew one who seemed to feel the responsibility of his calling more deeply."

CHAPTER II.

Commencement of preaching—Ordination—Marriage—A testimony of forty years' acquaintance.

He now decided to make the experiment to ascertain if he could say or do anything for God's cause, and for this purpose he desired to go abroad into some neighborhood and hold meetings. The way was opened in the following manner. Elder John Rand, an excellent minister, then living in Essex, Mass., was on his way to visit the churches in the south part of the State, and preached in the evening with the brethren in Salem. During his discourse he stated that he had felt drawn to visit the brethren,* as Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do," and that he intended going as far as New Bedford before his return.

This struck Benjamin's mind favorably, and he resolved at once to accompany him, if he was

* The early preachers among this people were literally and really missionaries, going from place to place, preaching the gospel of the grace of God. Although usually settled over some church, yet they did not, as now, confine their labors so much to one people; but travelling about, broke new ground, gathering new churches and scattering new life among the people, seeking the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

willing. Elder Rand of course was pleased with this idea, and encouraged him in doing so; they went on their way rejoicing.

At the various appointments, after Elder Rand had closed his sermon, Benjamin followed in exhortation and prayer — a custom still continued in many parts by this people, with great effect and usefulness.

After spending some time in New Bedford and the adjoining towns, Elder Rand returned home, while Benjamin continued in those parts holding meetings, and "daily in every house ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ." At first they were meetings for exhortation and prayer, but soon he named a text and endeavored to address the people in the form of preaching. Thus, in a few weeks, he who went forth with so many misgivings, became decided in his duty, and the Saviour's "yoke," to him once so unwelcome, now became easy and his "burden light."

To the *schoolmen*, this manner of beginning to preach may appear strange and unwise, but a moment's reflection will convince most minds that this, after all, is a very good way. It has this advantage, at least: in our becoming thoroughly satisfied in our minds as to our calling, before we have spent the best part of life in preparing for what, after all, proves not to have been our duty. Besides, many of the most useful and sterling ministers in various denominations have begun in a similar way, and gone on from one degree of usefulness to another, until God has made them pillars in the church

of Christ. Elder Rand himself had left the mechanic's bench, — like the apostles leaving their fishing boats, to go and preach the gospel of the Son of God — and had been greatly blessed in his work.

In his first visit to Essex, some time before this, in company with a Brother Hays, a lay member, he had seen, in the short space of five weeks, more than a hundred souls converted to God. Elder Rand was then a member of the Boston Christian Church, and ordained among them in 1806, when their meetings were held in Friend street. Officiating Elders present were, Abner Jones, Elias Smith, and Joseph Boody. He was the first preacher ordained among this people; the other three having been ordained among the Baptists before their separation.*

* The people called *Christians* or *Christian Connexion*, arose about the year 1800. They sprang up in three distinct and remote parts of the United States, East, South and West, without any concert of action, or any knowledge of each other's doings. Those in the East came from the Baptists, those in the South from the Methodists, and those in the West from the Presbyterians. After some years, they became known to each other and found that they were essentially one people. Each had laid aside all names but that of *Christian*, all creeds but the *Holy Scriptures*, and all tests of fellowship and communion, but a change of heart, holy life and Christian spirit; and each was striving for primitive purity, apostolic order, and a godly life. Hence they found they were one, and thus was formed the *Christian Connexion*. God grant it may be a holy alliance, and a holy people, "whose God is the Lord." They have spread into all the States, Canadas, Provinces, and a few in England. "In 1844 they numbered 1500 preachers, 500 licentiates, 325,000 communicants, 1,500 churches, and probably about 500,000 persons attend on their ministry."

Brother Taylor went to New Bedford in 1809, and there, and in its vicinity, he may be said to have commenced preaching. The fields were white already to harvest. Elders Smith and Plumer had before this preached considerably in those parts and seen much fruit of their labors. A small church had been gathered in New Bedford as early as 1807 or 8, and many friends raised up, who were warmly interested in this new order of people.

Elder Daniel Hix, of Dartmouth, an adjoining town, was a regular Baptist preacher, and had embraced their views, together with his church, and had come out on these free principles. He was a very sound, sensible man, though quite eccentric, but a powerful preacher, and consequently exerted a great influence over a wide section of country. He preached frequently with the church in New Bedford, as they were, up to this time, without any regular minister. But, on brother Taylor's coming among them, they were supplied with the ministry of the word more constantly than they had ever been before. As a natural result, the church began to revive and grow.

They had erected a small house for worship; it was but partly finished; for we hear of brother Taylor's standing on a carpenter's bench in the meeting house while preaching to the people. The brethren were now stirred up to the work of finishing their house. It was soon completed, paid for, and dedicated to the worship of the one living and true God and his Son Jesus Christ. This was one of the first meeting

houses ever built in the Christian Connexion. It still stands where it was first located, considerably enlarged, and since called Elder How's meeting house, he being, a long time, Elder Taylor's successor. Brother Taylor now travelled and preached in various places, although his home was chiefly with the churches in New Bedford and Portsmouth, R. I. In those days our preachers, like the apostles, "went everywhere preaching" the gospel of the grace of God. Often for weeks, and sometimes months, they held meetings day and night in different places, visiting and praying from house to house.

We hear of his preaching in Dartmouth, Freetown, Troy, Taunton, Boston, Salem, and soon after in Swansey, Providence, Fall River, Westford, Middleboro', Longplain, Fair-Haven, Wareham, Rehoboth, Wellington, Mansfield, Dighton, &c. In New Bedford and Portsmouth there was now some revival; souls were converted and desired to be baptized, and it was therefore desirable that he should be ordained, so as properly to administer the ordinances of the church.

An account of his ordination is here given, taken from the "Herald of Gospel Liberty," * a religious paper then published by Elder Elias Smith, at Portsmouth, N. H. "At a general meeting held in Freetown, (Assonet,) Mass., June 15 and 16, 1811, Benjamin Taylor was

* This was the first religious newspaper ever published. The first number was issued in 1808.

ordained, at the close of a sermon, by Elder Abner Jones, on Sab. June 16. Text, 'Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful,' 1 Cor. 4 : 1. Between 1500 and 2000 persons were present. The following ministers assisted at the ordination and signed the certificate: Daniel Hix, Philip Hathaway, Douglas Farnum, Ira Philips, Ebenezer Easty, Zephaniah Crosman."

In Elder Jones' diary we find the following :

"In June, 1811, made my first visit to the south part of Mass. Attended a general meeting at Assonet; preached the ordination sermon of Elder Benjamin Taylor, who was formerly a member of the Salem Church. A very great collection of people attended and it was a heavenly season. The Assonet church was large and flourishing and had a good meeting house. Elder Philip Hathaway, their preacher, was well engaged. They were formerly a Baptist Church, but had several years since left the Baptist name, and all creeds, and come over and joined the Christian Connexion. It was at this meeting that I formed the first happy acquaintance with the venerable Elder Daniel Hix of Dartmouth, Mass., who had recently renounced all party names and united with us."

We gather from various sources the following items :

"Portsmouth, R. I., June 23, 1811. Elder Taylor baptized for the first time, a number of happy souls, in the sea where there was much water."

"New Bedford, July 4th, 1811. Elder Benjamin Taylor baptized three happy converts, and the same day they were added unto the Church."

"Nov. 22. Elder Taylor made a request, and the Church agreed to the same, that there should be a communion on the next Sabbath."

The churches at this time not having regular preaching, could not of course have regular and stated observances of the ordinances; but this, together with the ministry, in process of time, became more regular and permanent; so that now the Lord's Supper is generally attended on the first Sabbath in each month. This also is very generally the case among the various denominations in New England.

The following from the New Bedford records show the form things had taken for a time previous to this —

"Brother O. K. was chosen Treasurer of the Church, to receive whatever sums of money there might be collected, from time to time, by contributions for relieving the wants of the public brethren, and to hand it out to them whenever he thought necessary; and that he should take advice from any one or more of the members of the Church on this subject, when he thought advice needful."

But a more definite engagement was entered into the following spring, between the Church and Elder Taylor.

"New Bedford, May 29, 1812. In Church Meeting — Elder Taylor now agreed to labor with them in word and doctrine as their preacher, as long as he felt the love of Christ constraining him; and the Church engaged to receive him as its pastor, and to do all they could for his support, as long as mutual agreement existed between them."

He next expressed a wish to be received a member of the Church, and for this purpose handed in the following letter, from the Church in Salem:

"This certifies that Brother Benjamin Taylor is in good standing in this Church, and is hereby recommended to the faithful in Christ Jesus our Lord throughout these regions,

and also we consider him one called of God to preach the gospel, his labors having been abundantly blessed in these parts.

Signed, in behalf of the Christian Church in Salem, this 13th day of May, 1812.

JOHN MEASURY,
JOSEPH SIBLEY,
JOHN BORDON."

At the same Church meeting, it is recorded—

"Elder Daniel Hix and Benjamin Taylor then proceeded to ordain Bro. J. Hammond to the office of Deacon."

The following is a copy of a letter written to Elder Mark Fernald of Kittery, Me., dated "Salem, April 29, 1813:

BENJAMIN TAYLOR, SERVANT: TO MARK FERNALD, SERVANT, BROTHER-LABORER AND MINISTER IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD. GREETING:

Thy favor of the 26th inst. was duly received, and I hasten to answer it. The first part of your letter expressed a desire to have it answered by seeing me face to face. I need not repeat the same words over to you in turn, although I desire the same and will therefore add my AMEN. You also mention that you hope to see me in the course of the summer; this gives me a gleem of hope that you feel it duty to visit the south country. I would to the Lord that you might, by the command of the God of Jacob, take up your horse and come over to New Bedford, as the apostles "took up their carriages and went to Jerusalem." Acts 21: 15. I think it may be truly said, the plants want watering. The question may be asked, why do you not water them? I answer, there are seven churches or companies that depend upon Daniel Hix the aged, and Benjamin the servant, for baptizing, breaking bread, and preaching the word. Daniel has been preaching 33 years. His vessel therefore will not conveniently carry water so far as it used to, and Benjamin's is very small; so that when he sets out with his watering pot full, he is most likely to have it all

drained off, by some good brethren by the way. Thus many of the tender plants are near to perishing from drought. Do, my brother, if you can think it duty, make us a visit. Be sure and write often.

The above is just as I feel. O how I want to see you and converse on some points in the Scriptures. Farewell. Pray for me.

MARK FERNALD. BENJ. TAYLOR."

A short time previous to this he became acquainted with Mrs. Mary, widow of Captain Elisha C. Rodman, of Newport, R. I. She was an esteemed member of a FREE BAPTIST Church in that place, of which Elder Michael Eddy was pastor. After a pleasant acquaintance of some length of time, they were married July 13, 1812.

They were soon settled in New Bedford, and things moved on pleasantly, the church increased in numbers and Christian graces. In looking over their church records, for the ensuing seven years, we find frequent baptisms and additions to the church.

God indeed was in their midst. Elder Taylor was now much devoted to his work, and strove with all his power to build up the church in faith, holiness and truth. So zealous was he for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, that during the week, days and evenings, he was abroad in various parts holding meetings, and often going from house to house conversing and praying with the people, and instructing them in the things of the kingdom. By a godly walk and chaste conversation, "he commended himself to every man's conscience as in the sight of God."

Still he had trials and difficulties to contend with. There were false brethren, uneasy members, who were never satisfied with reasonable things, and who must be on the wing of excitement or down by the streams of Babylon, with their harps upon the willows. Beside, this people were then much spoken against, which caused the weak to fall away, and to go no more with them.

But we are told that he was very diligent in looking after each member, and very thorough in church discipline, not suffering an absent, offended or fallen brother to go long without being sought after and entreated to return and continue in well doing.

About this time the threatened war between England and the United States greatly alarmed the inhabitants along the sea coast. In the town of New Bedford, which, in the war of the Revolution, was set on fire, they now expected serious calamities. A false alarm one night so terrified the people that many families, the next day, moved several miles into the country. Elder Taylor removed his family to Steepbrook, (Troy,) a small village on the Taunton River, thirteen miles distant. Here they remained until peace was restored in 1815; but Elder Taylor was not absent from his people more than two weeks at any one time.

He preached the gospel now in troublous times — the gospel of peace in a time of war. He was, however, always, from the first to the last, a minister of peace; he did not believe in war, or that it was right for Christians to fight.

Hence, while many were both in fear and rage, he was calm, going about doing good — praying for his enemies, and beseeching God in mercy to dispose the hearts of men to peace and concord; and to speed on the day when men, as well as angels, should sing, "*Glory to God in the highest, on earth, peace and good will to men.*"

The words of Isaiah, "He shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," were very precious to him, and he firmly believed they would yet be fulfilled.

It was often the case that one minister took the oversight of two or three congregations, and sometimes more, visiting and preaching with them alternately. This at that time was the more necessary, because there were more churches than ministers, and the destitute must be attended to or they would soon languish and die. Beside, one church could but poorly support a preacher alone. Elder Taylor, therefore, travelled abroad more or less, and ministered to the people in New Bedford, Steepbrook and Portsmouth. He was also called to spend much time in church-meetings in various places, in advising, and not unfrequently settling difficulties. For the latter, especially, he was always regarded as being of great service to the churches. Few men could do for them what he could; he was himself so humble, patient, and sympathizing, that unreconciled members

must be drawn together in love and peace when his bland spirit breathed in tenderness upon their hearts. He seemed among his people like a faithful shepherd watching his flock, a kind father guiding his children. He could always say with the apostle, "Ye know from the first day I came unto you, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you — but have showed you and have taught you publicly and from house to house — testifying both to Jews and Greeks, repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ."

He was also called to attend very many funerals far and near. Sometimes he would be called thirty miles distant, and although seldom paid his actual expenses in travelling, yet he always went at every call, unless sickness prevented, sympathizing with the afflicted, entering into their sorrows and pointing them to HIM who came down from heaven "to bind up the broken hearted, and to comfort all that mourn."

After peace was restored between England and the United States, he removed his family back to New Bedford and continued his ministry with the people there for some years. Having formed an interesting acquaintance with the people at Steepbrook, and seen the glory of God in the salvation of souls, it was natural that he should continue to visit and preach with them as he had opportunity.

It is said that he frequently preached here in

the evening, and then walked home to New Bedford the same night, a distance of thirteen miles. Why he did so, or what the occasion of such extreme exertion and exposure might have been, we know not. Persons under ordinary circumstances doing thus, would, we think, be exceedingly unwise; inasmuch as we are not lightly to throw away, or even endanger, the health and strength which God has given us for great and wise purposes.

During the winter he resided at Steepbrook, he taught school, in connection with his ministerial labors. He was also blessed with a very precious revival of religion in this place, and organized a branch church,* which for years after was like Joseph's bough, "whose branches run over the wall." He labored incessantly, both with his hands and mind. Circumstances being such, he was obliged to labor some part of the time for his support, and with the apostle he could say, "Yea, these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me." At one time he might be seen at work on the farm a part of the day, and then away to his appointment in the afternoon; at another, teaching school in the day-time, and preaching in the evening; and at another, working at bellows-making and then blowing the gospel trumpet far and near. It might be said of him, as was said to Elder Daniel Hicks: "Sir, I wonder you can preach so well when you work

* A branch of the New Bedford Church probably, or one still nearer.

so hard." To which he replied, "a clock keeps the better time for having good weights."

As late as June, 1849, in conversation with a humble, intelligent member of the New Bedford Church, one of its earliest members, he stated to me in substance, the following:

"Yes I remember Elder Taylor and his ministry here perfectly well; many of the best and most substantial members we ever had, were gathered in at and about the time of his being with us. He always maintained a very excellent character and a consistent Christian carriage among the people." Said he, "the preaching of Elias Smith had tended to disincline the people to give much for religious purposes, preaching as he did against salaries and a hireling ministry, a thing which the people here never needed much warning against; as we have always been inclined to give too little for God and his cause — which state of things made it the more difficult for Elder Taylor to get along in pecuniary matters. Still, although he always received very much less support in those days than he ought to have had, yet I never heard him complain, nor saw him falter, or give back in the least, on that account. Where we now raise eight and ten hundred dollars a year for our minister, then we never thought to raise scarcely three hundred; and yet it cost, in many things, as much, and in some more, to live then, than now. However, I think we give none too much now, but gave a great deal too little then. While Elder Taylor was not weighed down nor discouraged on account of the want of a proper support, still he was often very much depressed on account of the ills and wrongs, sins and short-comings of the people in other respects; so much so at times as to be led into great depths of sorrow and continual heaviness of soul. The language of the prophet seemed literally true in his case, when he says, 'O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them, *** they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; they proceed from evil to

evil and they know not me, saith the Lord.' At one time I remember there came along a minister who preached with us some time, and for whom Elder Taylor seemed to feel a great interest, and sought to help him in every way which lay in his power. But to his great surprise and mortification he found him one day drunk in the street. He burst into a flood of tears and endeavored for a time to reclaim him, but without effect; whereupon he exercised the painful duty of openly withdrawing fellowship from him.*

This, together with other trials, gave him such downcast feelings for days, as to make him almost sick. At the same time he would bear up under another class of difficulties with unusual fortitude and strength. His preaching was always fervent and instructive. He seemed always blessed with the increase of God. His heart was so filled with love and spiritual life that no one, I think, could listen to him any length of time without being benefited. His preaching was not only good and edifying, but his influence from the first to the last, wherever he has been, so far as I know, and I have known him for almost forty years, has been in the highest degree salutary and serviceable to the cause of Christ. He is a man of blessed memory, and the voice of the Spirit is true of him: 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; *** yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.'"

* It should be recollected here that this people then were just springing into life, and unacquainted with each other to a great extent, which left them liable to be imposed upon by false brethren. This, to my mind, however, is but a small evil to what it would be to reject and persecute a true disciple of Christ, in consequence of narrowness and bigotry. The truly benevolent man will be far more likely to be imposed upon by false beggars, than the covetous and miserly person. Yet who, on that account, would think it wrong or unfortunate to be benevolent? So in religious freedom and charity.

CHAPTER III.

Study—Difficulties—Improvement—Duty of Ministers to improve all their powers—Plain preaching.

From the time of Elder Taylor's conversion, if we except a short period, he had been a diligent student of the holy scriptures. His Bible, dictionary and concordance were his constant companions; and although his learning and qualifications for the ministry, in one respect, were limited, yet in another they were very considerable. Even at the commencement of his preaching there was a rich vein of holy thought, good sense, burning zeal for the glory of God, which gave power and life to the whole of his message. But added to this he always had a certain aptness to teach in holy things — to illustrate spiritual things by natural, the scriptures by human experience and natural history. He also soon became well versed in sacred history, especially that of the scriptures. After he had been preaching a few years, he seemed to be as conversant with the whole history of Bible scenes as the traveller is with the regions he has visited. The principal themes in the scriptures, with the great doctrines of revealed truth, together with the proof texts of each, were made, by care and study, so familiar to his mind, as to lead one to suppose he had the en-

tire Bible almost committed to memory. Thus on the subjects of a Change of Heart, Forgiveness of Sins, Prayer, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Justification, Sanctification, Election, the Resurrection, Judgment to come, &c., with many others, were so carefully arranged and committed to memory, as to be easily referred to on any occasion.

To give the reader an idea of this excellent plan, we give the following, taken from a little text book of his:

"WHO SHALL I OWN AS BRETHREN IN CHRIST?"

"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, sister and mother." Mat. 12 : 50.

"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy commandments." Ps. 119 : 63.

"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." Acts 10 : 35.

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; for he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men." Romans 14 : 17, 18.

Being naturally of quick and rapid utterance, and having large portions of the scriptures committed to memory, his preaching seemed like a shower of rain pouring in torrents upon the earth. Elder Jones once said of his early speaking, "that his exhortations were like a shower of stones." At one time he resolved on breaking himself of so rapid speech, and for this purpose put gravel stones in his mouth, and exercised his vocal organs in this way. But

this became so painful that in a little time he abandoned it. As he grew older, however, he overcame this, more and more, until this very faculty was so subdued as to become a powerful auxiliary in preaching.

To me all this reveals a noble and excellent trait of character in a minister of Christ — endeavoring to improve all the powers with which his Maker has endowed him, to the honor and glory of God; being neither easily discouraged at difficulties nor puffed up at success, or overestimating his gifts, "but to think soberly according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith." It is as proper for a minister to endeavor to improve his power of speech, as it is for him to to learn to read and write. Yea, it is his duty consecrate his best affections and powers to God and his service. Ministers of religion, as well as the navigators of the sea, the artisan or the statesman, should subject their faculties to the highest and best cultivation for their calling, remembering, however, that an humble, meek and Christ-like spirit is the highest of all human attainments; and that true religious culture is the improvement of the heart as well as of the intellect. The earnest and effective minister is a man of no common gifts, either of nature or of grace, and of no ordinary cultivation of intellect and heart. He is one whose moral powers are stirred from the depths of his soul — whose heart burns with the quenchless fires of divine love and goodness, and whose entire being is consecrated to the mighty work of subjecting

the world to the spirit and cross of Christ. To be such, he must be taught by the great Teacher, he must be made wise with heavenly wisdom, and be clad with an unseen armor of strength; his soul must yearn for the salvation of men, while the presence of an awful responsibility will lead him to exclaim with the apostle, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." Without feelings and qualifications answering to these, however great his attainments in human learning, his eloquence as an orator, or his arguments as a logician, he will come infinitely short of accomplishing the great work for which the ministry was ordained and the everlasting gospel to be preached; but with these, though wanting many others, the hearts of men will be touched, the enemies of the cross be slain, and the power of God be manifest, while souls will be "added unto the church daily of such as shall be saved." Says an eminent divine, "a minister who is listened to with interest, even when he has marked defects as a speaker, is in much fairer prospects of usefulness, than many a brilliant orator, whom a congregation hear at first with rapture, and then grow cold towards."

Many ministers, it is to be feared, fail of accomplishing much good, in consequence of not having any distinct and important end in view when preaching, or in conversation with their hearers. With not a few it seems to be a mere pastime, or a desire to please the fancy without benefiting the heart. Said an eminent divine, "let me purpose before I begin to prepare my sermon, some definite end, object and impres-

sion to be made on the hearts of my hearers, and keep this steadily in view to the close, expecting above all God's blessing to give the word success."

Many are not plain and pointed enough in their preaching, while others are too harsh, over-bearing and condemnatory. Ministers are not sent into the world as inquisitors, judges, or executioners; nor yet as sycophants and men-pleasers, but as "ambassadors for Christ," with a most weighty, solemn and joyful message; — a message not from one government on earth to another, or from one king to another, but a message from the God of heaven to the inhabitants of the earth, "Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth, for the Lord hath spoken."

Men need solemn and stern warnings, as well as soft and winning invitations, to bring them to Christ. God, who made man's heart, knows best what will reach and subdue that heart to the cross — and He says, "Son of man, thou shalt hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Even the blessed Saviour, who spake as never man spake, gave the most solemn and fearful warnings, as well as the most glorious and melting truths and promises.

The minister of the gospel, then, ought to feel that he is dispensing the truths of a religion revealed by God himself amid the thunderings and lightnings of Sinai, as well as the love and mercy of Calvary. A religion sanctioned by a long line of prophets, apostles and martyrs, with miracles and mighty works, all sealed by the

precious blood of the immaculate Son of God. They ought to remember, too, that he who *died* for men, taught them the fear of a future hell, as well as the hope of a future heaven, and opened before their eyes the dangers of the broad way to destruction, as well as the strait gate that leadeth unto everlasting life. These two great truths, like the centrifugal and centripetal forces which keep the planets in their orbits, must be brought to bear upon the hearts and consciences of men, in order to lead them to repentance, and also to keep them in the path of life. Thus hope and fear, like sunshine and rain, cold and heat, must unite in causing the seed of divine truth to germinate and grow, and to bring forth fruit unto the glory of God.

Right preaching, therefore, requires that the whole counsel of God should be plainly stated, and the truths of God's word presented to the mind in their true proportion, giving to each their portion in due season — and all this baptized with the love and compassion of a crucified Redeemer.

CHAPTER IV.

Preaching in Taunton—Providence—Removal to Swansey—Two Baptist Churches.

In the early part of his ministry, Elder Taylor visited and preached in Taunton, and Whittenden, a small village near by. A church was formed in the latter place, to which he often preached and administered the ordinances. In Taunton, he was often invited to preach in the Baptist Church, where he always found a hearty welcome and met a large assembly of people. It is believed that there never was a minister in Taunton so universally beloved, and whom so many flocked to hear, as Benjamin Taylor. And why this is mentioned and thought somewhat remarkable, is that it continued for many years, and even to the last of his preaching. Many draw a multitude after them for a time, and impress the people with their power and religious life for a season, but this continued for almost forty years. It was not thus, however, in every place where he preached. Even the prophets and apostles themselves had more honor and success in some places than in others. Hence our Lord said, "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country."

I find an account of his baptizing in Taunton as early as August, 1815. Also in Wellington,

now North Dighton, about the same time. In one of his memorandum books, I find the names of about seventy persons that he baptized, in Taunton and Whittenden village, from 1815 to 1823, and some twenty-five names of those baptized in North Dighton.

In Providence, R. I., he also visited and preached with some success. A church was organized here as early as 1812 or '13, and he, with others, ministered to them occasionally, as circumstances would allow. In 1819, when about to remove from New Bedford, he was very strongly urged by brethren to come to Providence and labor with them. He took it into deep consideration; but a larger field of more immediate usefulness opening in Swansey Mass., midway between Providence and New Bedford, where he had for years preached occasionally in private houses and school-rooms, he felt more drawn in spirit to the latter place.

However, there were difficulties attending this which were peculiar. The people in Swansey, with whom he was desired to labor, were Baptists. And although he felt no difficulty on his own part, in consequence of this, yet he feared that on their part there might unpleasant things arise on account of his being of a different denomination, which might in some way injure the cause and prevent much good being done. He visited and preached with them a number of times, and plainly stated his views and feelings, his anxieties and fears; but they continued to entreat him, with the Macedonian

cry, "come over and help us," till he was much inclined to believe it was duty to go. He did not fully decide to go, however, until on two brethren coming from Swansey to New Bedford, with the request from the church that he would come to their aid — with an assurance that the aged pastor (Elder Philip Slade, who, although unable to preach much, was still with them,) also united in this request, whereupon he gave them encouragement, "if the Lord will" he would soon come to their aid. An effectual door was now opened, and he felt called upon from above to enter it. He now made known to the New Bedford church what he believed to be the will of God in this matter. The church, on learning this, took immediate measures to express their strong desire that he would remain with them. A church-meeting was called and a committee chosen for this purpose. Elder Harvey Sullings, then an active member of the church, since a useful and respected minister of Christ, was chosen one of that committee, and writes me as follows:

"When the church learned of Br. Taylor's intention to leave, we were much afflicted on that account. The committee chosen to visit him, and to endeavor to persuade him to remain, waited on him early in the evening and continued their entreaties till late at night, but all to no purpose. He felt it duty to go, and like the apostle, he must obey God rather than men. Go he must, and go he did."

We might here add, however, that while no one could be more ready and willing to please his friends, to gratify his brethren at all times, than was Elder Taylor, still when it came to

pass that friends and brethren called in one way and God in another, he always, with the promptness of a confiding faith, turned trustingly to his Heavenly Father as the great determiner of his future course and duty. Like the mariner's compass, whose needle, true to the magnet, over and above the winds and waves, turns, though sometimes tremblingly, yet faithfully and steadily, to the poles, so is it with the heart touched by divine grace, drawn by the attractions of the cross. He now, therefore, decided fully on going to Swansey, and very soon after commenced his labors permanently in that place.

In Swansey were two Baptist churches situated about two miles apart, called the upper and lower churches. The upper church was Calvinist Baptist, the lower Six Principle Baptists. It was with the latter that Elder Taylor was called to labor.* Very soon after he had en-

* Six Principle Baptists are so called from their holding very strongly to six principles written in Heb. 6 : 1, 2. "Repentance, faith, baptism, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment." All of their members are received into the church by laying on of hands (like confirmation in the Episcopal church), after their baptism, and before coming to the communion. They were called Six Principle Baptists first by others, perhaps out of derision, like the Methodists, till they adopted it themselves. They are chiefly confined to Rhode Island and its immediate vicinity, being descendants from Roger Williams, who was the first Baptist in America—and one of the greatest reformers of his age,—and who, being banished from Plymouth colony and from Mass., fled among the Narraganset tribe of Indians, where he planted a colony, composed of 12 persons and called it Providence, inasmuch as the good

tered upon his labors here, the upper church, being at the time without a pastor, desired him to preach a part of the time with them. It is said that some of the brethren told him "that they had had the doctrine of election preached to them until the meeting house was empty, and that now they should like to try some other preaching, and see if it could not be filled." As Elder Philip Slade, the senior pastor of the lower church, was still able to preach in the morning, it was thought Elder Taylor might be spared to preach at the upper church mornings, and return and fill his appointments at the lower church in the afternoon. It was accordingly agreed upon, and thus began a plan of gospel labor which, under God, resulted in great good to both congregations.

Elder Taylor closed his labors in New Bedford, not because he could do no more good there, but because he thought he could do more elsewhere. The new field of labor opening before him promised an abundant harvest. He could already hear the Master saying, "thrust in the sickle and reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe — and say not there are yet four months and then cometh harvest; behold I say

providence of God had brought him safely there. That colony is now the city of Providence, R. I. He founded there the first Baptist church in this country, in 1632, but that church has since become associated with the Calvinist Baptists. The Six Principle Baptists are not Calvinists, but Freewill in this respect. In 1824 they had about 20 churches and 1500 communicants. We are told that since that time they have rather diminished than increased.

unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." And as we pursue the course of his labors, we shall see how true also is the language of the Psalmist: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

The following entry is copied from the church records:

"Sept. 4, 1819. Elder Benjamin Taylor having left this place and taken up his residence in Swansey, Mass., the following letter was given him by a vote of the church:

'This Certifies, That Elder Benj. Taylor hath for the most of the time during the last seven years, labored in word and doctrine with the church and congregation established in this place, under the denomination of the Christian Society, and hath during the whole of said period of time sustained an unblemished character both in his public and private vocations, regulating his life according to the duties of a minister of the everlasting gospel. Feeling it now to be his duty to labor in other parts, this church, of which he is an esteemed member, would hereby express their love, confidence and fellowship for him, as a faithful minister and servant of Jesus Christ.

Given in behalf of the Christian Church in New Bedford.

Signed,

John Hammond,
Abram Giffory,
Wm. Clark,
John Perkins,
Thomas Mandell."

We will close this chapter, with a short extract from Elder H. Sullings, on this subject:

"The Christian Church in New Bedford was organized in 1807 or '8. Elder Benjamin Taylor came to this place in company with Elder John Rand, in 1809, and continued with us until going to Swansey in 1819, with the exception of travelling considerably during the time. During his ministry with us, which was about ten years, there were added to the church 76 members, 44 of whom he baptized." *

Elder Sullings further says:

"I was intimately acquainted and associated with Brother Taylor, in the church, in the ministry, in prosperity and in adversity, and from the first to the last, which was a term of nearly forty years. I always esteemed him as one of the best of men, an excellent Christian and a good preacher. In his death the church have met with a great loss, which I fear will not soon be made up."

* It is proper to remark here, that during this time he travelled and preached in other parts, and saw many more conversions, aided in organizing a number of churches, and baptized many believers.

CHAPTER V.

Labors in Swansey continued—Revival of two years—Many baptized—His support—Friendly intercourse with others—Visiting the sick—How to find Christ.

Elder Taylor had been in Swansey a short time only, when some of the people hearing that his preaching was heretical, and that he was unsound in the faith, and being too ready to listen to evil speaking, became alarmed about his ministry and much disturbed at these tidings. These reports, of course, awakened the fears of the aged pastor, and for a time things looked very ominous.

Elder Taylor being of a pacific spirit, and one of the last persons who would go into a place to make disturbance, or even to encounter for any length of time a formidable opposition of this character, was minded peaceably to withdraw. Especially, when, as he thought he saw the appearance of a division among the people, at least in feeling. But he soon found that the majority of the people were entirely in his favor and utterly opposed to his leaving. Besides, a deep seriousness had already begun to be felt in the minds of the people, while many more believed he had a great work to do in that place, and that no small thing should prevent his doing it.

After much anxiety and fervent prayer on his part, and many entreaties from brethren, his mind finally opened upon one path of duty which he might pursue with safety, and that was to endeavor to go straight forward in preaching the word, and "know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified." And further, to have nothing to say in the pulpit or in private, of these unpleasant affairs, but by holy living and well doing, put to silence the ignorance of foolish men — believing that God could in his own way turn victory on Zion's side, and "make even the wrath of man to praise Him."

Upon this view of things, he was enabled to settle down with a good degree of calmness and "commit all his ways unto the Lord." He then prayed, if he had decided rightly, that he might see some token for good; whereupon the next Sabbath, a number of souls were hopefully converted to God, and rejoicing was heard in Zion.

From that time, things began to wear a more encouraging appearance; the power of God stopped the opposing influences and hushed the turbulent waves of passion, and the Spirit of God in a deep and solemn manner moved upon the hearts of the people.

In January, 1820, Elder Taylor was chosen to take the full charge and oversight of the church. At a subsequent meeting, Feb. 10, 1820, the church adopted the following among other resolutions:

"This church this day declares itself independent and free, and desires that the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, would be their leader and Saviour, and the Holy Scriptures the rule to govern their faith and practice by, and to receive their doctrine from."

It had been the usage of this church from the first, on receiving a pastor and teacher to its ministry, to extend to him through one of its deacons, the right hand of fellowship. In April, 1820, Elder Taylor was received a member of the church, and the Sabbath following, in the presence of the congregation, he received from Deacon Mason Gardner the right hand of fellowship, as the proper pastor of that church.

At the commencement of Elder Taylor's labors, in the autumn of 1819, there were 257 members of the church, and in April succeeding we find the number 298. All this time there had been an increasing interest in religion going forward, in both the upper and lower churches; and although there were some who were opposed to, and others felt unpleasant at, the new order of things springing up in their midst, still so patient and mild was Elder Taylor, so discreet and so persevering in his duty, that the work of God continued to go forward in the midst of it all. The secret of it was, "God was with him," and because of this "he was not troubled at what man should do unto him."

As he commenced, so he continued, not taking sides with any party feeling, but watching diligently to be found "on the Lord's side." He had learned the heavenly art of "overcoming

evil with good," and of "doing good for evil," a lesson which too many are slow to learn and others slower still to practise. So fixed and bent was his mind on doing his Heavenly Father's will, that he was not disposed to leave his high and holy work for a moment, to come down upon the plains of Ono to contend for things of small account. Like Nehemiah of old, he felt that he was "doing a great work, and why should the work cease while he came down unto them?" The plains of Ono were no place for him, but upon the walls of Jerusalem, even in the high tower, was his place of safety, as it was of usefulness. He was not known, throughout the whole time, and during all that was said, to give in return an unkind word, or in any way to irritate, but rather sought to conciliate and to heal. Let what would be said, he never attempted a rejoinder, but by rising above those things, in spirit and in conversation, continued to direct the minds of the people "to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."

This course of faithful labor, of patient continuance in well doing, was soon attended with a blessing from above. "The sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees" was heard, and God's people began to bestir themselves and "come up to the help of the Lord," while God himself "wrought with them in Israel."

While some still opposed this new light preaching, as it was called, God, on the other hand, blessed his own truth to the salvation of those that believed, and a glorious revival soon followed.

An account of one Sabbath during this revival is here given. Elder Taylor preached in the morning and baptized twelve persons at the upper church, and then, with his baptizing dress on and still wet, rode three miles to the lower church, where the people were assembled and waiting for another baptism. Here he immersed eighteen more, changed his dress, took some refreshment, and repaired to the church, where it is said, he preached a most powerful and affecting discourse to a solemn and attentive congregation. He was in his element and never in better health and spirits.

During this reformation he labored very arduously, and sought in all ways in his power to lead souls to Christ. At the close of the services, he might be seen going from pew to pew, conversing with serious minds, and kneeling with them, and earnest in prayer for their conversion. He was known to pray from three to fifteen times after meeting with different persons, deeply anxious for their souls' salvation. He was a shepherd seeking the lost sheep and leading them back to the fold of Christ.

One evening, while thus engaged, he found two young persons together, one of whom was deeply affected, while the other was heard in spirit and disposed to make light of these things. After a moment's conversation, in which he learned the state of mind of each, he knelt and prayed fervently for them, when to his surprise, as well as joy, he saw them both alike yield humbly to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Is not my

word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

This revival continued for nearly two years. The converts were humble, devoted, and steadfast, and much engaged for the glory of God. There were about seventy-five converted at the upper, and one hundred and forty at the lower church. Elder Taylor was heard to say at one time, "he had rather see these all die a happy death and follow them to an early grave, than to see them turn back again to the world, or fall away from their steadfastness to Christ." This was thought by some to be an "hard saying," but like our Lord who said, "if thy right eye offend thee (lead thee into sin), pluck it out, or if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, for it is more profitable for thee that one of thy members perish, than that thy whole body be cast into hell." So our brother thought it better that these should go to an early grave, rather than sin against God and "crucify to themselves afresh the Son of God, and put him to an open shame."

Said a friend, who heard this remark: "it seemed as if that desire was granted, for they generally held fast and were remarkably firm." Many of those disciples are still living, who can witness to these things, and by whom many of these facts have been communicated. God grant that they, like their under-shepherd, may continue faithful to the end, and with him "receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Some time after this revival, the upper church settled a minister of their own order, and Elder

Taylor confined his pastoral labors to the lower church and congregation. About this time also he purchased a small farm in Swansey, which made him a pleasant home, and which he cultivated with a great deal of active industry. He received from the church, as we are told, from one hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars, annually, for his support; this, with what he produced from his small farm, enabled him to support his growing family quite comfortably. Still, none but an industrious and prudent family could have been well sustained with so limited means.

Things moved on pleasantly, and Elder Taylor and his family soon became very much attached to the Swansey people, and that people in turn much attached to them. He was often heard to say, in after life, that he "never enjoyed himself better than while with this church, and during his ministry in that place." He also lived on very friendly terms with other religious societies, without respect to persons or sects. He exchanged pulpit services with the Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, and Unitarians. He once was invited to preach a funeral sermon in a Quaker (Friends') meeting house in Somerset. This, at the time, was thought remarkable, inasmuch as that people do not permit other religious sects to preach in their places of worship, although they are ready to preach in others' themselves, and very often improve such opportunities. When will Christians learn to do as they would be done by? when will they learn that charity and not exclusiveness forms "the

bond of perfectness ?" and is the only true way of keeping the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

It frequently occurred that persons of other communions came to hear Elder Taylor preach, and as often went away edified and quickened in divine things. A member of a neighboring church went a number of times to hear him on the Sabbath, and soon after was called to an account by the church committee for so doing. Upon being asked if he had not been to hear Elder Taylor preach, he frankly replied he had, and that he intended going again as soon as he conveniently could; and besides, he said, he was very sorry it was so far, that he could not go oftener. Here the matter rested for the time. The next week the minister of that church met Elder Taylor and accosted him with the inquiry: "Mr. Taylor, what are your religious views ?" Upon being answered in a frank and candid manner by Elder Taylor, he exclaimed, "well, sir, these are my views also. If these things be so, I wish you would preach for me some time." Elder Taylor assured him he should be heartily glad to do so, and very soon after complied with his request. From that time, till the close of his life, there continued between them the kindest feelings of friendship and Christian love. We are told that he has often preached with that people since, and was always listened to with great interest and delight.

This, it seems to me, is as it should be. How much better for those churches, for ministers

themselves and the cause of Christ was it, than if the opposite spirit had been cherished and manifested.

Elder Taylor's wife also co-operated with him in many ways in doing good and in seeking the spiritual welfare of the unconverted. A member of the congregation, a young lady of much promise, but "living without God and without hope in the world," was taken suddenly ill and brought down very low upon a bed of sickness. In her journal, she says:

"While upon this sick bed, Elder Taylor's wife came to see me, conversed with me upon the subject of religion, and then kneeled by my bed-side, and prayed most fervently for me. My distress of mind was so great that I wept freely and desired much to make known to her my feelings; yet so great was the cross of confessing my Saviour, that I did not. Soon after, Elder Taylor also came to see me; he inquired after my health and the state of my mind. I was very desirous he should know how I felt, and that he should pray for me, yet unbelief, self-will, and a proud heart kept me back, and again I grieved the Holy Spirit of God.

"I neither requested him to pray, nor did he offer to, but conversed very feelingly a few moments, and then left the room. Oh! the anguish of heart I felt for not asking him to pray for me. I now wept freely, and could exclaim aloud, 'Lord, have mercy on me!' When he came again to see me, and asked me how I felt in my mind, I frankly told him I was a great sinner, and needed a Saviour; but that I feared it was too late to find religion. 'O no, my child,' said he, 'the Lord is merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. He is more willing to bless you than you are to be blessed — only believe. Jesus said to all that came to him to be healed, "believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."' He then knelt in prayer, and while he was calling upon God in my behalf I felt a heavenly courage and vigor fill my soul. I indeed felt if there was any mercy for me I should now find it.

My desire was to continue seeking until I found Jesus precious to my soul. Soon after this I felt a calm resignation to the will of my Heavenly Father, and thrice exclaimed aloud, 'Father, thy will be done.' Upon which an animation arose in my heart, which enabled me to say:

'Glory to Him that sits on high
Pleading for sinners such as I.
O that all the world but knew Him,
And would be advised by me;
Surely they would come unto Him,
He would cause them all to see.'"

The foregoing instance shows how Elder Taylor and his wife labored in the sick room, and gives an insight, to some extent, into the secret of his success, in the great commission of "turning men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." It may also help to guide some who are asking in their hearts, "What must I do to be saved?" Acts 16: 30.

A passage from the writings of Madame Guyon, who lived in the days of Fenelon, and next to that great and good man, did more than any other person then living to revive pure Christianity in France, may serve to aid any others who need, most of all, to believe, to exercise simple faith. As she was brought up in the Catholic Church, she was very naturally led to place great stress on outward forms of religious service. While seeking in this way for peace and rest to her soul, she was told by her religious teacher: "Madame, your endeavors to find God have been unsuccessful because you have sought outwardly what you only can find within. Accustom yourself to seek God in your own

heart, and you will not fail to find him." She says, "these words were greatly blessed to me, and, under God, brought to my soul what I had been seeking by outward means for so many years." She continues, "O my God! Thou wast near my heart and I knew it not. O! Infinite Goodness! Thou wast so near, and yet I ran hither, and thither, seeking Thee, but found Thee not. I was poor in the midst of riches, ready to perish near a table bountifully spread. It was for want of understanding these words, 'The kingdom of heaven cometh not by observation: neither shall they say, Lo here, or Lo there, for the kingdom of heaven is within you;' that I went so long without receiving his grace and tasting his love. This I now experience, since Christ is become my King and my heart his kingdom."

The following beautiful lines she composed at the time of her illumination:

"All are indebted much to Thee,
But I far more than all;
From many a deadly snare set free,
And raised from many a fall.
O! Blessedness, all bliss above
When thy pure fires prevail—
Love only teaches what is love,
All other lessons fail,
We learn it not, its powers,
Experience only makes it ours."

That is, religion cannot be learned by the intellect only, but must be experienced in the heart. These extracts show that all true ministers teach essentially the same truths when they

come to the heart-work of Christianity, and that Christian experience is the same, whether in Catholic or Protestant churches; a fact which should greatly enlarge our charity and deepen our conviction of its reality and importance.

CHAPTER VI.

Chosen representative—Duty of ministers to government—Love of children—The ministry his great theme—Attends the ordination of his brother—Loses a child.

During Elder Taylor's preaching in Swansey he was chosen a representative by the people of that town. As the legislature met in Boston, he was therefore called there some three or four months in the year. He was not, however, idle in his Master's service while there, for his Sabbaths and many of his evenings were spent with the Christian Church in that place. Being, as they then were, without a regular pastor, his preaching was of signal service to them, and to this day, they speak of it with joy and gratitude.

After attending the legislature for two years, he was unwilling to go longer, feeling as he said, "that he was not in the way of his duty." It added something to his support, it is true; but he told his brethren as to "accepting the office again he could not do it," and further, "that he was willing to live with them and live as they lived; but that he could not bring his mind to go where he must legislate a part of the time for the people, and that he felt called entirely to another work."

Some of his best friends were displeased at

this, and thought he ought to consent to go. One of the principal families, which had hitherto given liberally for his support, now would give nothing, in consequence of his refusing to represent the town. He, however, consented to serve one or two years as Town Clerk and Treasurer, at their request, but soon declined this, inasmuch as it conflicted with his pastoral duties, and obliged him to attend the town meetings, in a capacity which he was unwilling to do. Said he, "it is a poor place for those called to stand on the walls of Zion."

While it is not the duty of ministers of religion, as a general thing, to fill these offices, because called to another work, a higher trust, yet it is their duty, living under a government where the elective franchise can be used for so much good or evil, and where a single vote* may sometimes give an entirely different direction to the affairs of a whole nation, to make themselves acquainted with the great interests and wants of the country, and to use that power and influence for truth, justice, and the best good of the race. Can means for doing good be put within our hands and we neglect to use

* "It is said a single vote sent Oliver Cromwell to the Long Parliament, Charles Stuart to the scaffold, revolutionized England, and made Great Britain free. Four votes, in the city of New York, made Thomas Jefferson President of the United States. One vote gave us the tariff of 1842, and one vote made the tariff of 1846. One vote gave us Texas, made war with Mexico, slew thousands of our people and purchased California, turned thither the tide of emigration, which may change the destiny of the world."

them with impunity? Is it of no interest to a preacher of the gospel what the character and principles of our Presidents, Senators, and Congressmen, Governors and Representatives shall be? yea, our Selectmen and School Committees? To whom can these questions be of greater moment? Shall they who are set as watchmen be false or indifferent here? Whose vote, if not the ministers of Christ, may we expect to be given in the light of true religion, sound knowledge, and the fear of God? Says the prophet: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." And who, let me ask, if not God's people, will be likely to elect such men to offices of trust?

Elder Taylor continued to carry on his little farm with interest and delight, and was emphatically "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." He was a farmer, a seaman, a mechanic, a school teacher, a minister, and, for a time, in the legislature. But none of these, nor all of them put together, were to him what the ministry alone was, and for this he would leave all the rest, having engaged in these things, only as Paul did at tent-making, to minister to his necessities, and to subserve the great end of preaching the gospel.* The preaching of the gospel of Christ was the great object and work of his life. This was

* Many of our preachers then, and not a few even now, are compelled to work with their hands, in order to sustain themselves while preaching the word of life. The love of Christ, and love for souls, constrains them to preach, although not sustained as they ought to be.

the height of his ambition, and the joy of his heart. Although he at first entered the ministry reluctantly, tremblingly, yet, now that he had entered it, and forsaken all for Christ, he could not easily be diverted from it. To him it was indeed the high calling of his profession; and the weight of responsibility in the ministry, to him, was immense. Others might talk about it, paint it in high colors, but he *felt* it. He lived it. He was in reality Fenelon's good minister, and faithful under-shepherd. If he was laboring, it was with a view to serve God's cause, or if in any secular business, it was only that he might ultimately do the more for God. Hence when ever so busily engaged at work, a call to attend a funeral, an invitation to hold a meeting, a request to go and succor, by counsel and sympathy, a weak church, found him always ready, willing, and glad to leave all and go to their aid.

He took great interest in children, noticed them, spoke with them, and sought to amuse them. They loved him as they loved a father, and he in turn loved them as a teacher and guardian; he led them as the lambs of the flock. He would sometimes aid them in their play-grounds, join them in their rambles and search for wild flowers. They would run up to him in the streets, with a confiding look, knowing that he would stop to speak with them, though ever so busy.

The aged, also, found great delight and satisfaction in his society, and listened with rapture to his conversation. He seemed always to

have something instructive for all. Thus the old and the young met in sympathy in his heart. They hung upon his lips, and drank in his spirit.

In 1828, he preached the sermon at the ordination of his brother, James Taylor, in the same place where he himself was ordained. It was a singular coincidence of circumstances, that just fourteen years from the time that he was ordained, at the same place, the same month, the same day of the week, and the same hour of the day, he assisted in the ordination of his brother. This, however, was not noticed till afterwards. He was more than ordinarily assisted, on this occasion, by Him, who said, "My grace is sufficient for you."

When addressing his brother, he spoke of the greatness of the work to which he was called, and the responsibility of the station. He was deeply affected, and when he opened to view the treasury of grace promised to the faithful minister, made accessible through the mercy of God and a crucified Redeemer, he was melted to tears, and many of the assembly wept with him.

Elder Taylor was now blessed with a pleasant family; but the little circle was not always to remain unbroken. A lovely and promising son, nine years of age, was suddenly called from their midst. He who had so often wept with others, was now bowed down with sorrow. For a moment the trouble seemed too heavy, the loss too great, for him to bear up under. But like the willow that bends to the blast, so his spirit yielded submissively to this

afflictive dispensation. Soon, however, the consolations of religion raised that afflicted spirit, in praise and adoration, to "Him who giveth," and to Him also that "taketh away." He could now say, "He doeth all things well." In the words of another, a kindred spirit, he could sing—

"Though plunged in sorrow, I resign
My soul to that dear hand of thine
Without reserve or fear;
That hand shall wipe my streaming eyes,
Or into smiles of glad surprise
Transform the falling tear.

Thy choice and mine shall be the same,
INSPIRER of that holy flame,
Which in my soul doth blaze;
To take my cross and follow thee
Where love and duty lead, shall be
My portion, and thy praise."

CHAPTER VII.

Preaches in Fall River—Visits the West—Moves to Michigan—Indians—Travels and preaches—Sickness—Visits New England—Preaches in Providence—Becomes Bethel preacher.

Not long before the time of which we are now speaking, a small church was gathered in the village of Fall River. Many of the members were young, and the church weak. Elder Taylor being experienced and well known there, it was thought advisable for him to take charge of this church, at least for a time. Accordingly in October, 1830, he commenced his labors with them, and continued nearly a year. He did not remove his family there, it being only about six miles distant from Swansey. He labored diligently and faithfully till the coming spring, when he made a short journey to Illinois and Michigan.

For some time he had been anxious to see the western country, and being well pleased with it, was much inclined to move his family there, upon one of those rich and beautiful prairies. He had now six children. The oldest son had followed the sea sometime, having been two whaling voyages, but was now willing to join the family in going West to settle upon a farm. Mrs. Taylor was very anxious to go,

the children were all willing, and Elder Taylor thought there was a prospect of doing much good in the cause of Christ, beside doing well for his family and keeping them all together.

Accordingly, in the summer of 1831, he decided to move West; and of course much preparation was necessary for so great an undertaking as it was then considered. Meantime Elder Taylor preached frequently with the church in Fall River, and often with the church in Swansey. When the last Sabbath that he would spend with a people so much endeared to him, by a long and happy acquaintance, by joys and sorrows, finally came, and the beloved and affectionate pastor was about to deliver his last sermon to the church where he had preached for nearly twelve years, he selected for his text the words of Paul: "And now behold I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befal me there." Acts, 20: 22.

It was an affecting scene — both preacher and people were melted to tears. Many of the brethren remember and speak of that season, with deep emotion to this day. Many endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose, but duty, as he believed, urged him forward.

Accordingly, on the 16th of August, 1831, he left Swansey for the far West, as it was then called, the territory of Michigan. A long and tedious journey lay before them. They went by packet to New York, thence to Albany, and to Buffalo, by the great western canal. To Detroit by steamboat, and to the interior by

wagons. After a journey of one month and two days, they reached that section of country called St. Joseph's, in the western part of Michigan; a rich and fertile country, watered with brooks and fine rivers, and covered with wide-spreading prairies. There were then but few white inhabitants in that section, and those were scattered over a wide extent of country. There were, however, many Indians, and those of a friendly and pacific character, except when under the influence of intoxicating drinks.

Elder Taylor's family were surrounded by the Pottawatamy Tribe. The old Chief, Sagamaw, and the young Chief, Shornoble, were kindly disposed, and often called in to see their new neighbors. Whenever the Indians were likely to have a drunken frolic, in consequence of having obtained whiskey from the whites, the Chiefs would go and tell Elder Taylor, saying, "Shut your doors, and not let them into your wigwam," (as they called his farm house,) "while they are squibly." By these timely warnings they escaped many dangers and difficulties, which they otherwise must have experienced.

As soon as they were sufficiently settled, Elder Taylor made inquiries about meetings, and we hear of his preaching in various places. He had, however, much to do in temporal matters, to make a beginning to live in that new country. House to build, trees to cut down, fences to make, land to break up, and seed to sow and plant. But one already inured to labor, diligent and active as he was, together

with his sons, could do these things more readily and with greater ease, than many others could have done. He was situated so as to exert considerable influence on a wide extent of country. Everything was new, forms of society unsettled, and might be easily made to take a false or true direction, both in regard to morals and religion, as circumstances determined. He, therefore, sought diligently to scatter broad-cast the good seed. He very soon gave a temperance dinner, at his own home, which gave a right direction to that subject in his neighborhood. He was a warm and active friend of temperance, and gave his entire influence for its success. The Indians, especially, needed the counsel and influence of a thorough, decided temperance man. They were kind when sober, but dangerous when intoxicated. Fortunately, from the first, Elder Taylor had secured their confidence and good will. They would come to him for counsel, for aid — with their difficulties and troubles, for him to settle them. He often did so. A very serious difficulty now occurred, which was as follows: Sometime before, the Indians sold the most of their lands to the United States Government, holding only what is called the "*Indian Reserve.*" After a while, Congress sent agents to purchase that, also, if the Indians were willing to sell. Each tribe had reserved ten miles square of the choicest hunting and fishing grounds, together with the graves of their fathers. For a time they were unwilling to sell, as they are a people which reverence deeply the graves of their ancestors. The Chief of

the Pottawatamy tribe, however, after saying he would not sign the papers to sell his lands, altered his mind, and went and signed them. This so offended a neighboring Chief, that he sought an opportunity to take his life. For this purpose he came to make Sagamaw, to appearance, a friendly visit. But one day while they two were alone in the wigwam, he drew a knife and stabbed him to the heart, causing instant death. This so enraged the young Chief, Shornoble, whose father had been killed, that he swore eternal vengeance on the wretch who committed such an atrocious deed. When the murderer could not be found, the young Chief came to Elder Taylor and wanted to know if he "would hang that villain like a dog,* if he would go and bring him?" Elder Taylor told him he had "no power to hang him, nor did he desire to." He said that it was true "he had been greatly injured, and that the man who did that wrong would have to answer for it, before Almighty God, in the DAY OF JUDGMENT. Vengeance belongs to God, he will repay. But while we are in this world, we must love one another, forgive injuries, do good for evil, love our enemies, and pray for them that despitefully use us." Upon this he went away, and gave up the idea of having him hung. After some persuasion, he consented to settle it in another way. His decision was soon communicated to the offender, a day was appointed, and the arrange-

* The Indians have a most horrid idea of hanging. They regard it as the most awful death one can die.

ments made for its adjustment. The young Chief Shornoble and his friends seated themselves in a semicircle, the offender and his friends met them, and sat down opposite, thus making an entire circle. The old men began by smoking the pipe of peace, then speeches were made — after which the offender offered the presents to the young Chief, which were to atone for his guilt. The presents consisted of several pieces of broadcloth, red and blue, a bag of silver dollars, and several ponies. When the young Chief came to receive them, it was with some reluctance, especially when the offender gave into his hands the bridle-reins of the ponies; but, inasmuch as he did receive them, it was then settled.

Elder Taylor was taken sick, and thus prevented doing much for some time. The country being new, the land very rich, and thousands of acres broken and tilled in a year, caused the decay of an immense quantity of vegetation, which, it was thought, filled the atmosphere with a sickly vapor, very injurious to health.

In 1835, the writer saw him at the Christian Conference held in Jacksonburg, Michigan. He preached during the session of Conference, and administered the rite of baptism, and the Lord's Supper. It was the first time he had ever seen him, and his faithful preaching, fervent prayers, solemn and interesting remarks and manner during the ordinances, deeply affected his heart. The brethren in the Conference seemed to look up to him, as to a father. They felt the value of his gift, his experience, his wise

and judicious counsel, and above all, his fervent piety and devotion to the cause.

He was a number of times chosen by the Conference to travel through the State of Michigan, to hold general and quarterly meetings, in order to build up the churches, draw together the scattered brethren, break new ground, as it is often called, and above all, to awaken an interest and promote revivals of religion. Once, I think, he travelled in company with Elder John Walworth, an able and efficient minister, who also did a good work in that State for our cause, and at another time, with Elder John Cannon, who is still working on in that region, with undiminished zeal and usefulness. Although their efforts and success were much abridged in consequence of a want of means in carrying out their missionary plans, still they did much for the cause of Christ. A brother of Elder Taylor's who moved to Michigan afterwards and settled near him, and to whom reference has been made, writes me as follows:

"My brother labored hard and patiently here for several years, but the country being new and sparsely settled, he, as well as myself, saw comparatively little accomplished to what we desired. We differed in our doctrinal views on religious subjects, but I do not know that we ever exchanged a word with unkind feelings during the time we resided together in this new country."

At different times Elder Taylor was taken sick with the fever that prevailed in the early settlement of that country, which made him desire to visit New England, to improve his health. A kind providence soon opened the way. He

received a letter from the Christian Church in Providence, R. I., then without a pastor, desiring him "to settle with them; and if he could not be prevailed upon to settle, to come and preach with them, a year at least."

On receiving this call, he decided at once to make a visit East among his friends, if possible improve his health, and as far as the way might open, preach with the church in Providence. After residing about nine years in the West, he returned to New England on a visit, which not only greatly improved his health, but resulted in his settlement for several years, in Rhode Island. He arrived in Providence in June, 1840, and preached the following Sabbath, with the Pawtuxet Street Church. They were anxiously waiting for his arrival, and his coming to them was like the coming of Titus — and as a cloud fraught with rain.

After spending a short time with this church, he left for a few weeks, and visited his aged mother and two brothers in the ministry, then residing in Portsmouth and Middletown, R. I. He also visited Swansey, New Bedford, and Fall River, where he met the congregations of his former charge, with whom he had spent so much of his life.

His health now improved, and he returned to Providence and continued his labors constantly. The writer had been pastor of that church for more than two years before, and was happy to be succeeded by one so devoted and eminently useful in the cause of God. The church had enlarged their chapel while he was with them,

and purchased a lot of land, with a view to erect, at some future day, a larger house of worship, which has since been done. At the time he left, the chapel was well filled, insomuch that one of the deacons remarked, "Brother ***, I fear you mistake your duty in leaving,—it is true you may have a larger house, but I think not one better filled;" yet now, on Elder Taylor's coming, it was literally filled to overflowing.

In the course of the following winter, Elder Taylor was blessed with a very precious revival, and many were added unto the church.* His ministry, this year, did much, under God, for the upbuilding of the church, and for the good of the cause generally. It was during this year that the friends of seamen, and seamen themselves, formed the plan of erecting a Bethel, and obtained from Elder Taylor a partial engagement to become their preacher, providing they met with encouragement sufficient to go on with the Bethel enterprise.

He returned to his home in Michigan, in June, 1841, and remained there through the summer. In September, he received a letter from friends in Providence, informing him that there was a strong prospect of soon having a Bethel for the mariner, and claiming of him, when such should be the case, a fulfilment of his promise, viz. "to become the Bethel preacher in that city."

* He was assisted very much in this revival by his brothers, Elders James and John Taylor, the latter of whom succeeded Elder Benjamin Taylor in the pastoral charge of that church.

About the same time, he received another letter from the Pawtuxet Street Church, desiring him to be at the dedication of their new house of worship, on the first of November. It was further stated in the letter, it was believed his coming to Providence to labor as seamen's preacher, would strengthen our cause in that place, and aid them in paying for their new house. Having a desire to do any service for the cause of God, and the encouragement of those brethren, which lay in his power, he made arrangements to be in Providence the last of October. He therefore was present, and assisted at the dedication. It was a season of considerable interest to that people, and their prospects now looked truly encouraging. Elder John Taylor, a younger brother, then the pastor of that church, was preaching to good acceptance and success. The following December, the Bethel was so far completed as to be open for Divine service — and was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God, and the salvation of seamen, by appropriate religious services, on the 14th of December, 1841. The sermon on the occasion, was preached by Edward T. Taylor, of Boston — a man of remarkable gifts, and one who has done much for seamen. His text was, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." Luke 2: 14. In the evening, Elder Benjamin Taylor spoke from these words: "And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them." Is. 3: 4. From that evening until the 5th of July, 1848, he labored with untiring

zeal and self-sacrifice, in the cause of his Divine Master.

He usually preached three times on the Sabbath, morning, afternoon, and evening. In the evening, after a short sermon, they held a prayer and conference meeting, all being invited to stay and join with them. Much of the time, nearly the whole congregation remained till the close. He was particular to close the meeting at nine o'clock, that all might return home in good season. In this way he secured good attendance, with good order; and more than all that, a deep and living spirit of devotion was felt in the church, a holy zeal, and revival interest was manifest, followed often with the conversion of souls; so that rejoicing was heard in their midst, even as "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." Luke 15: 10.

CHAPTER VIII.

REPORTS.

REPORT TO THE PROVIDENCE SEAMEN'S FRIENDS' SOCIETY, FOR THE YEAR ENDING DEC. 14, 1842.

BRETHREN: Every man of observation knows that no important enterprise is entered into, whether religious, moral or political, where, in its beginning, the whole ground of labor can be seen at one glance. In prosecuting the objects of such societies, new discoveries are made, new fields of labor open, and increased energy and labor are called for.

On entering upon my duties as Seamen's preacher, in this city, one year ago, I was not fully aware of all the work that would naturally devolve upon me. I have, however, endeavored to meet the openings of Divine Providence in all cases where the sailor has been immediately concerned, with the ability God has given me, together with the means placed at my disposal.

Notwithstanding the great amount of good that had already been done for seamen of this port, by the Ladies' Bethel Association, in opening a Temperance boarding house for them, together with the active labors of Mr. Douglass, the city missionary, still the sailor was left without a place where he could go and attend religious worship and feel at home. By the united efforts of the seamen of this port, who subscribed about seven hundred dollars, and other friends in the city, the sum was made up to about eighteen hundred dollars; but still being unable to build such a house as was desired, two gentlemen, entrusted with the subscription, by a vote of the society, came for-

ward and erected this house of worship. Although it is not yet entirely finished, as to pews, yet it is made comfortable.

Its doors were opened for religious worship one year ago the 14th day of this month, (Dec., 1841.) The two gentlemen referred to have executed a deed of conveyance to the mariners of this port, and placed the house, by this deed, in the hands of twelve trustees, selected from different religious societies of this city, to hold the same in trust forever, secured to the religious worship of the seamen of this port. Those gentlemen, however, have a clause inserted in said deed which gives them security on the house and lot, for the amount paid out by them, over and above the subscription, limited to two years.

The cost of the building and lot in its present condition is about four thousand dollars.

From what we have seen the past year, very many of the seamen have needed little persuasion to induce them to attend statedly on Divine worship; for as soon as a place was prepared in which they could assemble in common with their brethren, they readily embraced it.

The number of mariners attending worship here, I think, includes the greater portion of all in port. Our house has been opened for worship regularly every Sabbath, the year past, and our congregation has been much larger than I expected at the commencement. I think our meetings are increasing in interest with the sea-faring portion of our community. The number of interesting letters I have received within a few months past, from sailors who have left this port and sailed for different parts of the world, show how deeply interested they are in the cause and prosperity of the Bethel. They ask particularly, "how are you getting along at the Bethel?" In addition to my labors in preaching statedly in this house, I have endeavored to furnish seamen going from this port, with Bibles, Testaments, tracts, books, pamphlets, hymn books, religious and moral newspapers.

Every one acquainted with seamen knows very well that many of them are under very bad influences while in port; many are in the habit of drinking ardent spirits, and the older often lead the younger astray. Others are under the influence of their landlords, many of whom feel no interest

for their present or future welfare; while others are under the influence of those places, the inmates whereof lead in the way of death. "Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Prov. 7: 37. It is chiefly in a free and unembarrassed state of mind that we must look to the sailor, with a view to do him good. And if we do not find him thus on shore, we must follow him to sea, look for him in the forecastle of the ship, sitting on the windlass, or leaning on the capstan, and there commune with him, if not in person, by books, tracts, &c. No soil promises a richer harvest than the heart of the sailor, only cultivate it when free to reflect, and weigh moral and religious truths; then, yea, then sow the seed, give it broadcast to the winds of heaven, and a bountiful harvest, under God, of precious souls for whom Christ died, will repay thy toil, and rejoice thy heart.

BETHEL CHURCH.

The advice of many wise and experienced friends of seamen, such as Edward T. Taylor, (Seamen s preacher in Boston,) and others, together with my own convictions of duty, have led me to organize a church in connection with this Bethel. Our object is to make the Bethel a permanent resting place for the mariner and his family.

We were sensible that in many instances in this country, Bethel churches have not been formed with the houses of worship. But to me, the arguments and demands for such organizations, were strong and conclusive. The sailor, being at home but a small part of the time, it is natural to suppose he will attend the Bethel, where there is one. He feels no disposition to go elsewhere for the ordinances of God's house; he wants them here, for this is his home. It is here the minister of Christ enters into his feelings, his temptations, sufferings, and dangers. Here he occasionally alludes to his nautical life, often carries him from the truck to the keelson of the ship, overhauls the rigging, comes to, hands sail, weighs anchor, gets under way, tacks ship, beats off from a lee shore — in all of which he opens to his mind divine things — advises him to run up his signal for a pilot, which is Christ, take him on board, and all will be well. Now in all this the sailor feels at home in the Bethel. He is in his own native element, surrounded by

his own friends and brother shipmates. In addition to this, by his side sits his own wife and children, all engaged in hearing the precious word of life that drops from the lips of their own minister, who feeds the devout heart with the hidden manna of the kingdom of Heaven.

Shall he leave the Bethel, and go to some other meeting, where he has no seats for himself and family, and in all probability has to sit in the gallery of the church, where he feels little interest either in the meeting or the preacher? But this he must do, once in each month, or not enjoy the service of the communion, because there is no church at the Bethel.

But, on the other hand, when at sea on Sabbath morning, at least in his imagination, he sees his wife and children going to the Bethel, and if communion day he expects his wife, if a Christian, to be in her place at the Bethel; and although he is far from home and from his brethren, on a voyage at sea, he takes a trip home in his devotional thoughts, communes with his brethren, then returns to his duty on board the ship.

Another reason we offer in favor of Bethel churches is, the wife of the sailor will, of course, attend the Bethel while the husband is at home, and will she leave it as soon as he is gone? Certainly not. She feels her attachment to this place because her husband is attached to it: it is here she hears the man preach who is acquainted with a sea life. It is a truth, the lady who gives her hand to a sailor, whether he belongs to the forecastle or cabin, is never more happy than when carried in her imagination to the place of his labors, toils and sufferings; it is here at the Bethel she hangs upon the lips of the preacher, because he spiritualizes the whole nautical life of her husband and she loves to be among the ropes of the ship, because there both her husband and Saviour are found through a preached gospel.

I have been credibly informed that there are many pious females in our seaports, whose husbands follow the sea, that make the Bethel their place of worship, yet never become members of any church, because there is none at the Bethel; their husbands are at home but a small portion of the time, and not being acquainted at any other place of worship, they do not seek an acquaintance, because the Bethel is their home, and in this way both they and their

husbands live all their days without enjoying the ordinances of the gospel in church fellowship. The sailor needs all the strength there is to be derived from a strict adherence to the New Testament, and to the gospel ordinances, to enable him to meet the temptations and trials of a sea-faring life. In my opinion the cause of Christianity is much weakened among our brethren who follow the sea, in the course pursued by many of our Bethel associations by there not being churches connected with them. It it our duty to spread all the sail we can, take the advantage of every breeze, in order to secure a prosperous and safe passage to our destined port.

It is contended, on the other hand, that if churches are formed at the Bethels they will be sectarian, because they will belong to some one of the denominations of Christians in our country, and by this means the support of the different denominations will be withheld from them. I would ask, do not the ministers at the Bethels now belong somewhere? We will admit the churches at the Bethels do partake somewhat of the religious sentiments of the minister; is this a sufficient reason for closing all the avenues of charity that might flow to meet the support of the Bethel? If this is the case, is our charity of that kind that beareth all things, hopeth all things? If there were churches attached to the Bethels, in all our seaports, would not our brethren who are constantly falling into our harbors know where to go to find a home on communion days? But as it now is, they know not where to go; and for months together they are deprived of one of the most precious ordinances of the gospel, and are much weakened in their religious feelings by this neglect.

Our Bethel Church in this city was organized the 15th of May, 1842. The number of its members at that time was twenty-two, — it has since increased to thirty-one. One has deceased, leaving the number thirty. It affords me pleasure to state to you, that ten out of the thirty are men that now, or have, followed the seas, and twelve of the above number, are wives and widows of sailors. We have felt a very great anxiety to increase our members with sea-faring men and their families. It is the sailor we have in view, and it is to him we preach; it is the sailor for

whose good we labor, and we ask you to assist us in reclaiming our too long neglected brothers.

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

After the Bethel was opened, it was thought advisable to open a Sunday School at the house, for the purpose of giving the little sons and daughters of the mariner an opportunity for instruction, at the house where their parents would probably attend religious services. Several meetings were held in the Bethel on Sabbath mornings, for the purpose of making arrangements to get the school under way; it however, was not brought into a regular organized state until Mr. John C. Lee, from the Richmond street church, who had formerly been a sailor, offered his services to assist us in the school. Mr. Lee was soon chosen superintendent, and since that time our school has assumed a permanent stand and a regular course of instruction. Our teachers, both the young ladies and gentlemen, in this school, seem to have come to us under the influence of the spirit of the sailor — never to leave his post when stationed to the braces of the ship, until every sail draws. Notwithstanding the many discouraging things we have had to encounter, our teachers have been very generally punctual and faithful to their charge. Our school now numbers about fifty promising children; it affords me pleasure to state to you that out of this number twenty-six of them are the children of seamen.

We have had to grapple with the oppressive hand of poverty in this department, as we have in some others, having neither money nor books with which we could commence. We applied to some of the Sunday School societies in the city, and from the "First Congregational," and "Beneficent Congregational" Sunday school societies, received a supply of books with which our school was opened; since that time we have made application to other societies, and been kindly supplied with second hand books, both for our libraries and school teaching. In carrying the school forward up to this time, we have expended $5 37; this sum has been laid out for infant primers, blank class books, singing books, &c. I now tender my most sincere thanks both to the Sunday school societies, and private

individuals, in behalf of our Sunday school, for your libererality, and ask a continuance of your favors in time to come.

MARINE HOSPITAL.

I became acquainted with this institution the latter part of last winter, or early in the spring. I have made it a practice to visit this place every week during the summer, but have failed in some instances in consequence of being out of health, and occasionally out of the city. The whole number of persons that have been sent there by the proper authority, and placed under the care of the attending physician, Dr. Rives, since the 1st of January, 1842, is forty-one. The gentleman and lady who have the charge of this house, appear to be much interested for the sailor, and do all they can for his comfort while under their care. The house has not been without more or less sick at any time during the year past. In this house a good opportunity has been offered to recommend the blessed religion of our Saviour, and that moral reform so essential to the happiness and prosperity of the seamen; and on all occasions I have found them willing to hear me pray, and to converse on the subject of religion. There I have found some men who had professed the religion of Christ in early life, but had lost their first love, who, when taken sick, gave evidence of their desire to return to Christ again, and in tears have asked me if I would give them a Bible. In all such cases I have been able to furnish them with the precious word of life, to carry with them, when discharged by the physician. In other instances I have found some of them very sick, and as the gentleman who has the care of them is allowed only $2 50 per week, for board and nursing, it cannot be expected that he can furnish those items that would conduce much to the comfort of the sick sailor; when I have thought they needed these things I have made their wants known to ladies of my acquaintance, and have always been supplied, either with the articles needed or money to purchase them. In the year that has passed, I have found no difficulty in raising those small sums of money that were needed to relieve the wants of the distressed sailor.

THE DELEVAN MARINE TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY.

On inquiring, a few months ago, I found quite a number of seamen of this port who had become, by the advice of their friends, members of the WASHINGTONIAN TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY. It was, therefore, thought if a society could be organized, its name bearing particularly on the mariner, and its meetings held in this part of the city, in the vicinity of their boarding houses, it might create a deeper interest with seamen, and be productive of much good.

I named this subject to several of our Bethel friends, and found it met their views; and accordingly such a society has been formed in this house. In this, as in all our other movements, the object was to improve the condition of the sailor. We have had a number of able and feeling addresses delivered with good success. We now number sixty-six members, and it affords me pleasure to state that thirty-five of them are sailors, fourteen of whom are reformed men. The use of intoxicating drinks is the greatest foe we have to contend with, in the reformation of the seaman; we can do little for him until he resolves to sign the pledge, and becomes a sober man. Of all the men in our country none fill more responsible stations than the mariner. If men filling the highest post of honor and trust on shore become inebriates, you can discharge them, and place others in their stead; but who can discharge the captain of a ship, mates or crew at sea — the ship, cargo, and lives of all on board depending on them? Frequently there are many passengers on board, perhaps some of them your sons and daughters, whose feeble state of health has induced you to trust them on shipboard, for the recovery of the same, in a milder climate.

The present condition of our mariners calls upon the public for help. It is the sailor that has made our nation what it is; by his means our canvass has whitened every sea on the globe. Our eagle, stripes and stars have waved in every port of note in the known world; and shall we let these hardy sons of Neptune sink before our eyes? Shall a part of the thousand mariners that sail out of this port be left to perish under the influence of the intoxicating cup, while the unknown heathen, in foreign countries, are sharing so largely in your prayers, labors and benevolence?

BENJAMIN TAYLOR.

Elder Taylor made it a constant practice to visit the destitute families of seamen, and many called on him for aid, and never went away empty, or without exertion on his part to assist them all he could. He would sometimes spend days together in aiding them, perhaps in soliciting means to pay house rent for some widow whose husband died at sea; and sometimes he might be seen with a basket of provision for the needy. Many times he would seek employment for those that had no work, interceding with ship owners in their behalf. He always requested such, however, to sign the temperance pledge, not being willing to recommend any that would not become strictly temperate.

In 1842, he suffered much in his feelings, on account of the political difficulties which arose at this time, called the "Rhode Island War." The city of Providence was under martial law for some time, and for days together things looked sad and dreary enough; but notwithstanding all this, he kept on his way, preaching the same gospel of peace he ever had done, not turning aside to the right hand or the left, — yet for this very straight-forwardness some blamed him. About this time it was told him that his name was on the list of those intended for imprisonment, but still none of these things moved him, for he believed he was doing right in preaching peace, even in a city under martial law. But after remaining in the city, in the midst of tumults and the din of war, until his very soul revolted in him, at the daily spectacle presented before his eyes, and wearied with

noise and confusion, he went into Massachusetts, and remained there until peace and order were again restored to Rhode Island, when he returned and prosecuted his labors with his usual diligence.*

* This was a very serious political excitement, growing out of an endeavor on the part of a portion of the people to effect a change, viz., to do away with the colonial charter first granted by England, and which restricted the liberty of voting to freeholders and their oldest sons, and to substitute in its place a constitution, formed by delegates chosen by a majority of the people. Others, taking a different view of the manner and way of effecting this change, thought the delegates for draughting a constitution to be presented to the people, should be chosen on the old plan of voting, and under the sanction of their existing authorities, — and therefore, were opposed to what, for a time, was called, "*The People's Constitution*," or at least, to the manner of constituting its legality. The one went forward, adopted the constitution, chose their officers, and declared themselves the proper authorities of the State. The former civil authorities declared these movements to be illegal, and therefore resisted. For a time the excitement was so great, as to give the whole State the appearance of being on the verge of a most dreadful and sanguinary war. A number of collisions took place, in which men were shot dead. For a while, the most excited and bitter feelings prevailed, and no one knew where it would end, or when he was safe. A number of ministers of the gospel who were supposed to favor one side too strongly, were threatened with imprisonment, and some were shut up in jail for a short time. Not a few, who were strong peace men, like Elder Taylor, were persecuted, threatened and endangered. It was under these circumstances that he, like his divine Master, when persecuted in one city, would flee to another. However, in due time, a constitution was formed under the sanction of the existing authorities, and adopted by the people; since which time, things have moved on quietly. Colored people can now vote in the State of Rhode Island.

He often took much pains in collecting second-hand clothing for destitute seamen, till finally the ladies interested in this cause, formed a society, called "THE PROVIDENCE SEAMEN'S FRIENDS' SOCIETY," which attended to this department, and very much aided him in his benevolent plans. Favors bestowed on sick or destitute sailors seemed to rejoice his heart more than if done to himself, and no one, we think, could rejoice over an own son more than he did when one of his sailor-boys returned from sea rejoicing in temperance, religion and sobriety. The Bethel Church, being many of them seamen, it was a source of great comfort to him, in believing they would become as missionaries, to bear the glad tidings of salvation to distant lands.

EXTRACTS FROM VARIOUS REPORTS.

"There are three great points to be kept steadily in view, in our mission and work among seamen. One is, to save the mariner from intemperance and make him a sober man. Another is, to surround him with religious influences, to give him a preached gospel and sanctuary privileges. The third and greatest is, to seek his conversion to Christ, that he may become a man of faith and prayer; and through him to send the gospel of our salvation to the four quarters of the globe."

In one report, it is stated —

"I have collected and put on board of various ships sailing from Providence, Warren, Bristol, and Newport, 199,680 pages of books, tracts, &c., 99 Bibles, 16 Testaments, 13 hymn books, 3254 religious and temperance newspapers. Many of these have been put on board of whale ships, bound for the Pacific Ocean, where they meet with other vessels, long absent from home, and anxious to get any thing new to read. Thus they will feed some

minds, and we trust, do some good. But O, the need there is of good, solid, religious books for seamen. If we had Bibles or Testaments enough to supply every sailor with the '*Word of Life*,' it would be a blessed thing. It must, and will, ultimately be done. I have recently received from the 'Young Men's Bible Society,' of this city, a number of Bibles for gratuitous distribution, for which I thank God, and thank them.

"I have also received, for the same object, second-hand Bibles. But it is often mortifying to my feelings, and sorrowful to my heart, to be obliged to turn away a sailor, it may be a young man, who has been cast away, and lost his chest, his clothes, and with them his Bible: he comes to me to beg one, and lo! I have none to give him, or if I have, it is a second-hand one, soiled and torn, and a part of it gone. Some object to giving the Bible promiscuously to seamen, because it is said they have sometimes been known to sell or pawn it for liquor. This may be so, in some cases, but seldom. No such instance has occurred, to my knowledge, during a three years' ministry. I was, not long since, told by the President of the American Seamen's Friends' Society, (Captain Richardson, of New York city,) that they gave the Bible indiscriminately to mariners, if they were capable of receiving with it, a good exhortation; he also said he had not known of one instance where the Bible had been sold for ardent spirits."

"The Bethel Church is yet in its infancy, and its number small; fourteen, however, have been added since my last report. We have had no extensive revivals for the last two years, the state of religious feeling being low, generally. I think, however, the members of the Bethel Church have held fast, and maintained their religious profession quite as well as those around us. I have received a number of letters from young men at sea, who professed religion while on shore with us, which give good evidence of a living, growing piety, and of devotion to God. 'As cold water is to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.'"

Sabbath School. "Our Sabbath school has been kept up, and attended with zeal and interest, both by the superintendent, teachers and scholars. The school has

numbered, in all, over one hundred scholars. Several of the teachers who were among the first to offer their services in this good work, have continued till now with unabated interest and fidelity. I cannot here do justice to my feelings, without expressing to the superintendent and teachers, in behalf of the children and parents, our thanks for their kind attention and labor of love." (Many of these teachers came from other churches in order to do good.)

MARINE HOSPITAL. "I have continued my visits here weekly, and sometimes oftener, as the case of the sick demanded. For the two years past, (1843 and '4), one hundred and twenty-three sick seamen have been sent here by the collector of this port. One hundred and seventeen have recovered and been discharged; six only have died."

"THE DELEVAN MARINE TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY. We have continued our endeavors to keep the subject of temperance before the minds of seamen, by holding a regular monthly temperance meeting. There have been added to this society, since the last report, 353 members, most of whom are seafaring men, and a number were in the habit of drinking to excess." * * * *

In his last report, he says:

"This society was organized in 1842. Its meetings have been continued, and I think much good has been done by its steady, uniform course. I have had four, six and eight seamen at a time come to my room together, and sign the pledge. This society (1848) numbered 856 members, and what affords me pleasure is, I can say in truth, more than one half of this number are seamen."

Elder J. S. Thompson, the Bethel preacher, says:

"I often witness the blessed effects of the labors of my worthy predecessor, Elder Benjamin Taylor. Seamen return from a long voyage, and come to me saying, 'Where is Father Taylor?' I answer, he is gone—gone to heaven, where he so often pointed you, when here on earth. Tears start in their eyes, as they turn away in silence and walk sadly on, as if their best friend on earth was no more.

Fourteen of these hardy sons of the ocean came home at one time. — they had signed the temperance pledge at the hand of Father Taylor, and had all kept it to a man, and had preserved the very pledge first given them, with Elder Taylor's name and theirs upon it, side by side."

Bethel Debt. "From the first, the Bethel has been seriously embarrassed by a heavy debt. After collecting and paying all that could be raised on the original subscription for building a seamen's church, there still remained a debt of $2811 on this house. Since then, I have been abroad among friends, and raised by contributions and small donations $318 13. We have also received from two religious societies in this city, Rev. Mr. Hall's and Rev. Mr. Osgood's, $800, and from the Christian Church in Boston, by the hands of Elder E. Edmunds, $200, — making in all, $1318 13, reducing our debt (including interest, &c.) to about $1500."

Destitute and Distressed Seamen. "In the course of the two last years, I have frequently been called upon by destitute and distressed seamen, for aid. Coming, as they often do, from other ports, without money, clothing, or acquaintances: boarding houses are unwilling to take them in, under such circumstances,—except in cases where they have been cast away, then, I am told, one gentleman always receives them. Being thus situated, they next inquire for the seamen's preacher. At first I supplied them from my own resources. This I found I was not able to do. Accordingly I made a statement of these facts before this congregation, upon which a collection was taken up of $10 16, and from various individuals $2 03, and from Rev. Mr. Osgood $5 00, making the sum of $17 19. Of this sum I have expended the past year $13 18. I have handed this out in small sums, as low as four cents at a time. I have, in some instances, paid for those destitute seamen, one, two and three days' board, as the case may be, until I could get them work, or they find it for themselves."

The following letter was written by Elder Taylor to a brother minister, in answer to various inquiries relating to the Bethel, his support, health, and purposes in the future:

"PROVIDENCE, March 18, 1848.

DEAR BROTHER *****: In answer to your inquiries, let me say, our congregations are good, nearly as large as in any part of my ministry — our brethren think quite as large; but the attendance at the Bethel is fluctuating somewhat, as it necessarily must be, owing to seamen going and coming, and the seats in the house being free.

As we have thus far had no subscription for preaching, and no income from pews, my support has been what the people throw into the contribution box, of their own free will. These contributions are taken up every Sabbath, averaging, for some time past, $5 43 per week. In 1842, the amount was some seventy dollars less than the year previous: in 1843, it was $339 69; in 1844, it was $347 55; and for the past three years, about $ 328 annually. I pay $80 a year for house rent, and from 30 to $40 for fuel. Sometimes I have a marriage fee, and presents from friends; we have, however, a good share of company and visiting friends, but none too many — for I love my brethren, and am always glad to see them. On the whole, I have been able to bring my expenses down to my income, for the most part; although at present I am $ 20 in debt, which I hope to pay sometime, when the Lord opens the way. For the last four years, I have not laid up a dollar. What little we have in the West, is a part of what Mrs. Taylor had when we were married. I wish, in case I were to be taken away, I could leave her something more. She has been a faithful servant to the Christian brethren — our house has been a welcome home to many of them, and to all that have called, by night or day, for more than thirty-five years.

But enough of this. O could I make our brethren sensible that the Bethel is one of our own children, given us under God, for our good, and as a means of doing good to others; could they see how I have been laboring for nearly seven years past, and that I have worn out in the service, and am now out of health, have received but a bare living, and at times but a short one, — I think they would arise, and put to a helping hand, and place the Bethel on a permanent footing and free it from debt.

I am constrained here to say, as I would ever thankfully acknowledge the liberality and Christian kindness of our Unitarian brethren, in aiding and encouraging us in the

Bethel cause; that they have already given us $1000, and are now subscribing liberally again to make up the remainder. They have never said a word, or manifested the least disposition to draw us to them, or turn us aside in the least from our simple, plain, earnest course; but, like the good Samaritan, when we were afflicted and pressed down with a heavy debt, have poured in oil and wine, as it were, giving us money to help us to do good with. I see plainly that I must leave here soon, but it will be with an anxious heart; for my happiness, in a measure, is identified with the Bethel. I have been a sailor. I love the sailor, he is a man, a brother, and by the grace of God, may become a Christian. Finally, I would acknowledge with gratitude and love, many blessings from my Heavenly Father, and many favors and kindnesses from friends and brethren throughout my whole life. I would be sensible that "every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights," from Him, who notices the sparrows as they fall, and numbers the hairs of our head. Into His hands I now desire to commit all, and to say, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Anything you may find it in your heart and power to do for the Bethel, or for me, will be gratefully received.

Your affectionate brother,

BENJAMIN TAYLOR."

SEAMEN'S BURYING GROUND, FOR SEAMEN, WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF NATION OR COLOR, WHO HAVE NOT FRIENDS TO PERFORM FOR THEM THE RITE OF BURIAL.

Such a burying place for seamen, Elder Taylor succeeded in obtaining, favorably located. He says, in speaking of it at the time: "I wish it located where the sailor will naturally pass it, in going to and from the Marine Hospital, that he may see the respect shown his brother shipmates, even in the mansions of the dead. I am desirous to fence it, and also to ornament it with trees. * * * When those bodies interred on the city lands shall have been removed to this place, a correct register of the burials is intended to be kept, so that each grave may be known and identified by friends who may inquire for them in after time."

Over the gate leading into the burying ground, is written, in large letters —

"OUR LAST VOYAGE IS OVER."

It is solemn to reflect how soon, in that same burying place, is being erected a humble monument to the memory of him, who, so little time ago, was anxiously securing a resting place for others. But when, with Job we can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand, at the latter day, upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another," we may sing, even then, in the beautiful language of Beattie —

"See truth, love, and mercy in triumph descending,
And nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom,
On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are blending,
And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb."

CHAPTER IX.

Decline of health—Journey west—The dropsy—Joys of home—His death—Reflections.

Elder Taylor's health, for two or three of the last years of his ministry, had been declining. Sometimes he was thought, by physicians, to have the asthma, at others, the palpitation of the heart, or the heart complaint, while at other times he felt quite well, yet he did not enjoy as good health, as in former days. He performed much labor, however, and kept constantly at his post. In the winters of 1847-'8, he was troubled with shortness of breath, and faint turns. In the spring, this indisposition increased so much, that early in June, he decided it was his duty to leave his charge at the Bethel. He had, for a long time, cherished the hope of returning to Michigan, to spend the evening of his days where the most of his family were, his wife and one daughter only being with him in Providence. He also hoped that resting from his arduous labors, with a change of climate and scenery, would favorably affect his health, and enable him to do something more yet for the cause of Christ in the West. In one of his last letters to me, he says, in closing:

"O could I have left here one year ago, and gone West, I might have done something, in connection with brother White, (our missionary there,) but now I fear all is gone by. 'The Lord s will be done.'"

Before closing his labors in Providence, there was one thing, especially, he desired to see accomplished, and that was, the Bethel paid for. Rev. Mr. Hall, who, from the first, had taken a deep interest in the Bethel, and had been a true friend to Elder Taylor in his labors, went around, personally, with him, in securing subscriptions for this object; but before completing the whole, Elder Taylor's health failed so rapidly that he was obliged to relinquish it entirely. He was now so unwell, and daily growing weaker, that he felt if he ever returned West to his friends, he must immediately commence his journey. It was thought a trip on the salt water might be beneficial to him, and he took passage, July 5, 1848, with Captain Gibbs, for Albany, by water, while his wife and daughter were to come, a few days after, by railroad. In the mean time, Mr. Hall finished collecting the funds for the Bethel, paid all demands against it, and sent word to Elder Taylor, by his family, that, "*the Bethel was paid for.*" The kindness and benevolence of these Christian friends in subscribing, and Mr. Hall, in collecting the sum due on the Bethel, (where Elder Taylor had labored so long, and for the prosperity of which he felt so great an interest,) when told him by his family, that "THE BETHEL WAS FREE AND ALL PAID FOR," entirely overcame him; and he could only give vent to his feelings by a flood of tears, and

exclaimed, "I have nothing to do now but to visit my children and die."

His wife says, "he was now more overcome and rejoiced, than I recollect ever to have seen him before, and his friends can never be grateful enough to those who were so kind in aiding in this worthy object."

She continues: "While in Albany, we stopped with Elder Jasper Hazen, editor of the 'Christian Palladium,' and the kindness of his family to my dear husband will long be remembered with the liveliest emotions of gratitude and love."

They had made much dependence on the favorable tendency of his excursion on the water, in improving his health, but when his family met him at Albany, they found him still weaker than when he left Providence. While here, they called on a physician, who pronounced his disease the dropsy. They had, until now, supposed it the asthma, or heart complaint. They were very anxious to proceed on their journey, and accordingly did so; but he was so unwell when they arrived at Rochester, that they stopped for a short time. Here they called in a physician, who visited him twice. He agreed with the one in Albany, that it was the dropsy, and advised them to tarry a while in the city, as he thought he could help him. But Elder Taylor was so anxious to get to his journey's end, that he could not be prevailed upon to remain. As they proceeded on their way, he suffered extremely. They often feared he would not survive the journey through, but God in his good-

ness spared him to reach his home, in safety. He was much exhausted by the fatigue of the journey, but the joy of meeting his children was so sweet to him, that, for a time, he lost sight of his weakness and distress in the raptures of home.

He often referred to the Bethel and the seamen, saying, "Well, I am very happy in the thought that I trust I have done all that lay in my power for the sons of the ocean." He also seemed to feel very glad that he had been favored to leave the Bethel in so good hands, saying, "I firmly believe Elder Thompson will do the best he can for the cause; beside, they have many both able and willing to aid them. The Lord will bless the Unitarians in Providence, for their kindness to the sailor.* If the Lord in mercy should spare my life, I hope yet to see them, to thank them, and to recommend Christ to them all again in this world. O that every converted seaman may become a missionary for Christ."

When Elder Taylor gave up the Bethel, he seemed to give up everything in this world. His mind was calm and peaceful, and he often introduced the subject of religion in private conversation with neighbors and friends who came in to see him.

His health now gradually declined, and on the 4th of August, they called a physician, who

* The Unitarians of Providence gave not far from $ 2000 towards paying for the Bethel, for which Elder Taylor ever manifested the deepest gratitude.

said he had the dropsy, and that it was of so long standing, he feared little could be done for him. He suffered exceedingly, but the physician was unable to do much for his relief. They next called a Botanic physician, but his mode of treatment was equally unavailing. Another regular physician was called, who proposed tapping; he called two other physicians, however, to consult with him, and after due deliberation, they decided it was best. August 10th, they drew off over ten pounds of water — and the next day, two pails full were drawn from him during twenty-four hours. He was then quite comfortable for a time, but in a few days he filled again, and had to undergo a second operation, on the 22d of August, and a third, on the 5th of September. After this, he was so much relieved, that his family had hopes of his recovery; and he himself appeared quite encouraged, in view of the relief he now experienced. Through the whole of these painful scenes, he was calm and resigned; yet, at times, he would appear somewhat downcast in his mind, as if the sun was obscured from his view, when again the "SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS" would shine forth in noonday splendor, and he could sweetly say —

> "There 's not a cloud that doth arise,
> To hide my Saviour from mine eyes."

In him was verified the language of the apostle, "for though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day." He was happy in the prospect of death, yet with

Job, he could say, "All my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."

"One morning very early," says his wife, "he wished me called, and said to me, 'my dear, it is my wish that you would now give me up.' Upon his saying this, I fell down upon my knees by his bedside, and prayed fervently to God, that he would spare his servant to his family if it could be consistent with his will. He added his amen, at the close, the same as in former instances, when I prayed with him during his sickness. Still, we were all so anxious for his recovery, that we could not give him up until one more physician, whom report said, was very skilful in such cases, was called, and after some persuasion, my husband consented, although he evidently preferred we should all give him up then. He came, on the 20th of September, gave some encouragement, but added, he 'feared the dropsy was of so long standing, it would be difficult to remove it.' His medicine had little effect, and soon our hopes were again blasted. On Saturday, our son Joseph, who had been absent, arrived home. His father seemed much pleased, and rejoiced to see him, and they conversed till a late hour. Joseph watched with him that night. Early in the morning he awoke, but not so bright or so well as the night previous. This awakened anxiety in Joseph's mind, and he called the family. I spoke with him; he seemed calm and happy, but very weak. He was sitting in an easy chair, and it was thought best to have him lie down. He still grew weaker, and

breathed more faintly. We all burst into tears, when he looked up with a smile, and said, 'do not weep for me, children, do not weep for me, my dear, — I am happy.' After a moment's pause, he exclaimed, 'Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, down to the latest generation, for his wonderful goodness to the children of men.' Thus saying, and breathing shorter a few moments, he fell asleep in Jesus. A smile still rested upon his countenance, in death, as in life. He died on the Sabbath, September 24th, 1848, about eight weeks after our arrival in Michigan."

A short time previous to his death, Elder Taylor said to his family, "It may be that I shall drop away suddenly; if so, send for Elder Farley to preach my funeral sermon — pay him for coming. If brother White (a missionary in that region, sent by the New England Christian Missionary Society, in June, 1846,) was not so far away, I should request you to send for him." When Elder Taylor's brother, who lived near by, and came often to see him during his sickness, learned of this, he went thirty miles for Elder White, to come and attend the funeral services. He came, and preached on the occasion, to the joy and comfort of the mourning circle, from these words: "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." Ps. 12: 1. The funeral was attended in his brother's meeting-house, in Schoolcraft, Michigan.

Thus ended the days of one of the excellent

of the earth — peaceful, blessed. It was on the Sabbath, a day which had been so joyful and happy to him, on which he had so many times preached Christ, and sung his praises in the lower sanctuary; now he had gone to join the blessed above —

> "Where congregations ne'er break up,
> And Sabbaths never end;"

there to see Jesus as he is, "and so forever to be with the Lord."

> "The dead are like the stars by day,
> Withdrawn from human eyes;
> But, not extinct, they hold their way
> In glory through the skies."

[From the Christian Herald of October 19, 1843.]

DEATH OF ELDER BENJAMIN TAYLOR.

The death of this devoted servant of God was, to many truly affecting. It was in a great measure unexpected, although his continued illness and the aggravated nature of his disease, betokened an approaching dissolution. The same weekly messenger that brought, as was hoped, the glad news of returning health, brought also the mournful intelligence of his departure and death. As we read these words, "Death of Elder Benjamin Taylor," our hearts were struck with solemn awe. Is it possible! exclaimed many a throbbing heart. Many eyes were suffused in tears, as they read the death of this good man. And is it indeed so? Is that voice which once spoke words of peace and comfort to so many hearts, hushed in silence? Is that fatherly counsel, that affectionate greeting, which has cheered so many a young minister on his way, comforted so many a mourner at the grave of loved ones, enlivened and blessed so many of our ministerial gatherings, and so many of our congregations and churches, to be heard no more? Is the poor sailor, who has listened with delight to that fatherly voice on ship-board, in the street, by the way, in the hospital and in the house of God, calling him away

from sin and temptation, from danger and death — and pointing him to the Lamb of God, to hear it no more on earth? Yes, we shall hear him no more, save as the voice of Abel, and the voice from the spirit-land, "Though dead yet speaking," saying, "weep not for me, all is well, all is well." And do we not now hear a voice saying, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, they shall rest from their labors and their works do follow them!" Yes. And though we shall see him no more, and hear his voice no more on earth, yet he is not lost to us; yea, he is not dead to our soul's communion, though withdrawn from our outward vision — still we feel he is with us in a higher sense, which gives him back to us in a more sanctified relation than ever.

In looking over the life and labors of Elder Taylor, we can but be struck with the fact, that he died in God's own good time — and like Enoch, "he is not, for God took him." He died in the Lord, he died in faith, he died in peace, and rests in hope. Said one of the martyrs when expiring, "this is a good time to die, the right time, for it is God's time." The apostles all died the right time — when their lives and deaths were worth most to the cause of God, and would tell most in favor of Zion. So it has been with good men from time immemorial. So we believe it was with our brother. Not but his life would have been useful still, more useful than mine, more so than many others; but like an apostle he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day." And when we can say this, and say it truly, then is our time to die. But O, many never can say this, because unfaithful servants — such must die unprepared, and hear the sentence of the unfaithful steward, "Depart, I know you not." But in the death of our beloved brother, I trust all are enabled to say, "The Lord's will be done." He that "giveth," knoweth best when to "take away." "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

His death will be felt as a public loss. And not this alone. There are many who in private are filled with grief for the departure of one, to whom, under Providence, they

owe their best treasures of mind and heart. May God comfort them; and may he comfort that still nearer and dearer circle which looked to him as the husband and father. In the hours of sorrow, may they be strengthened by Him, who is the widow's God and the Father of the fatherless. May they be supported in this time of deep affliction, and find the same consolation and grace in Christ Jesus which that husband and father found for so many years. May the Bethel church and congregation with whom he labored so long, and for whom he felt so deep an interest and had so recently left, be blessed with the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and this solemn providence be greatly sanctified to their spiritual good.

May old friends and acquaintances who loved him dearly, be stirred up and greatly quickened in spirit, that they also may be found ready when the master calls; and may the Christian Connexion generally, with which Elder Taylor was so long united, and to which he was ardently attached, be suitably impressed with the loss which it has sustained in the death of one of its oldest, ablest and most useful ministers. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." E. E.

CHAPTER X.

Reflections on his life, character and ministry—Lines on the cenotaph placed in the Providence Bethel.

We have now hastily gone over the life and labors of our departed brother, and seen the spiritual mariner entering the port — the soldier laying off his armor and retiring from the field, the laborer and pilgrim going to his home and entering his everlasting rest. It now remains to give a general view of him, as a man, a Christian, and a minister.

As a man, he was kind, gentle, and obliging — pleasant and agreeable in all the relations of life — exact and strictly upright in his dealings, punctual in his engagements, and stable in his course of life. He so blended the man with the youth, the parent with the child, the Christian with the citizen, that he secured from all, both old and young, love and respect. Children loved him, men confided in him. In business transactions, as in all his intercourse with men, his conduct was above reproach.

As a parent, he was tender and affectionate. He ever manifested that even temper of mind and sweetness of disposition, which spread a delightful influence around him. If he did not rise to those rare and uncommon heights of ex-

cellence and power of character that some have, neither did he descend into that low and groveling weakness which is so common to men. But, in him, we see that broad and expanding level, gradually rising higher and higher throughout a whole life. When we consider the circumstances of his life, that he was called into so many kinds of business with various classes of persons, and filled places of trust, it is remarkable that he should have retained the confidence and love of the people so generally as he did. An inexperienced hand may steer the ship or steady the helm when out to sea, but the experienced master is required, when in difficult straits, amid rocks and shoals, or drifting hard upon a lee-shore. Many were the instances of this character through which our brother was called to pass, in the course of his life. The fear of God was before his eyes, and with the Psalmist he could say: "I have set the Lord always before my face; he is on my right hand that I should not be moved."

He was not only an excellent man, as a man, but an excellent Christian, as a professed disciple of Christ, "an Israelite in whom was no guile." And it was this Christian spirit, this love and fear of God in his soul, constantly with him, as with Joseph of old, that preserved him in temptation, supported him in trial, and guided him in doubtful and difficult places, giving him an invincible power to press his way through obstacles and opposing influences of every kind. But this came chiefly from that calm, meek, and Christ-like spirit, with a living

faith and trust in God, which he so eminently possessed.

When others would have fretted or grown excited under trials and injuries, and thus have aggravated them, he was calm and forbearing, trusting that God would make "all things work together for good to them that love him," and that He, in some way, perhaps unseen by man, would bring all things to work for the best. It is by forbearance and kindness that we often draw persons to the right, and to duty, sooner than by sternly persisting in having things our own way. Yet there was a firm, undeviating course with him, notwithstanding this conciliatory spirit.

He was in no sense a changeable, vacilating man, sailing sometimes under this flag, and sometimes under that. He never was known to equivocate or dissemble in religion or temporal things. There were no low intriguing plans, no play upon words, no "having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." It seems to me he had too much of the spirit of Jesus to be susceptible of such things. He loved goodness for goodness' sake, and righteousness for righteousness' sake. He loved devotion to God and love for man wherever he saw it, or under whatever forms of religion expressed.

There was a catholicity of spirit, a charity in his soul, which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and that never faileth," which rendered him free and cordial to other Christians without distinction of name, condition or race; and which, in turn, drew others to

him. Yet he was clear and decided in his own religious views, and steadfast in his religious attachments. He was a member of the Christian Connexion, and nothing, either by way of prosperity or adversity, could, in the least, move him from it, or turn him from his "first love." He could say, with one anciently, who replied, when asked, "wouldst thou be spoken for to the king?" "I dwell among mine own people," — and with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to turn from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried."

He was at one time assured, by a confiding friend, who had already done much for him, a member of another communion, that if he would only change his denominational relation (without changing at all his doctrine or faith), so as to stand nominally with them, he could obtain for him a thousand dollars a year for his services, instead of the small sum he was then receiving. But no, he said he could not. He believed he was where his Heavenly Father placed him, where, in the providence of God, he had been so long, and where he had been blessed — and that if he ever changed his relations, it must be from higher considerations than human policy or earthly gain and aggrandizement. With the apostle, he could say, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other

creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is delightful to contemplate that staunch friend of the Christian Connexion, that weather-beaten "voyager o'er life's solemn main," arriving safe in port, without a sail furled, with his colors at mast head, streaming to the winds of heaven. Ah! a redeemed one has moored his bark fast by the throne of God.

As a minister of Christ, he was humble, faithful and devout. He possessed good natural talents, but not rare, — yet his gifts were so united with the love and meekness of Christ as to make them somewhat superior and extraordinary. We do not say he was a great man, in the sense of enlarged and comprehensive powers of mind, with varied learning, a strong and vigorous intellect, with vast resources of thought and imagination, as Fenelon, Wesley, or Channing; yet great in goodness, love, purity, devotion to God, as any of these — great in that moral, spiritual goodness, without which, in the sight of Heaven, all other greatness fades into insignificance. If, as our Lord teaches, that man is greatest who loves most, who receives and holds fast the living truths of God most firmly, who suffers most for Jesus' sake with an unfaltering trust, then, it seems to me, he was great in the true sense. The apostolic eulogy seems peculiarly fitting to him: "he was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." Acts 11: 24. This is more than saying that Barnabas was learned, eloquent or great. To pure minds, this is the highest praise. There

are different acceptations and standards of greatness and of goodness. To be great, or to be good, according to the world, is neither a very difficult thing, nor is it a very worthy one. But to be good according to Christ and the apostles, is both. This requires us to be "filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith." Had Elder Taylor been favored with better opportunities of education, of intellectual culture, when young, it doubtless would have brought out hidden beauties and excellencies, which, like those of the marble, lie hidden until the finishing hand of the sculptor brings them to light. But, as it was, who that knew him cannot say there were bright scintillations of light, and thoughts of inexpressible excellency springing into view, and scattering brightness and joy along his pathway?

He estimated his gifts and powers the humblest, I mean the least, of any one I ever knew. The smallest gift in others seemed to him of more consequence and more interest, than his possibly could be. This peculiarity, while it possessed many excellencies, was liable to many evils. He was continually in danger of underrating his own abilities, and undervaluing himself and his power to do good, — and hence not as likely to endeavor to extend his usefulness.

Elder Millard said, in regard to Elder Taylor's valuable gifts, that "he seemed never to think his life or gift of sufficient moment to be of interest to any one. Some years ago, when travelling through the State of Michigan, he

said to me, 'O, Brother Millard, if some able, devoted ministers could only come here and take hold with us, we could do something, but as it is, I fear we do not reach the people.' But," said Elder Millard, "I found, while attending meetings with him, there was no man whom the people were more anxious, or came farther to hear, than Elder Taylor himself." He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Jesus was clothed with humility, yet he did not undervalue his power or his Divine mission. The apostles were humble men, but not by underrating their gifts or power to do good. Says the apostle, "For I say unto every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." There is evidently danger in estimating our gifts and capacities too low, as well as too high. The one may lead us to reflect blame on the great Giver, the other, "to seek things too high for us," or "to stretch ourselves beyond our measure." He could truly say with the Psalmist, "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor is mine eye lofty; neither do I exercise myself in things too high for me; my soul is even as a weaned child." While there was, on the one hand, so low a self-appreciation, so humble an estimate of his own abilities, that he was led to feel continually, "I am the least of all saints;" yet, on the other hand, he entertained such high and exalted views of Christ's power and grace to help man's infirmities, such unwavering confidence in the promise, "My

grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness;" that with the apostle he could affirm, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me: yea, when I am weak, then am I strong." An elegant writer has said: "It is a sure indication of good sense to be diffident of it. We then, and not till then, are growing wise when we begin to discern how weak we are. We are apt to value ourselves upon any proficiency in the sciences: but there is one science worth more than all the rest, and that is the science of living well. This will remain when 'tongues shall cease and knowledge shall vanish away.'" Well might the eloquent Young say, when attempting the description of a good man —

> "Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw
> What nothing else than angel can exceed,
> A man, on earth devoted to the skies—
> Like ships at sea, while in, above the world."

Elder Taylor's preaching was earnest but not boisterous, fervent but not visionary, convincing but not terrifying — mild and persuasive rather than dictatorial. He was not a Boanerges, but a son of consolation; yet sons of thunder are as necessary as sons of consolation. God had them both in the church anciently, and no doubt has now. Elder Taylor was rather a Barnabas, "exhorting them that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord," winning souls to Christ — persuading men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. There is a chord in men's souls which vibrates and responds to the preaching of such a man. If

he did not arouse the mind, the intellect, so much by cogent argument, he did that which was better, moving the heart and engaging the affections by his heavenly pathos and affectionate appeals. If, as some have supposed, he preached more from the affections than from the intellect, he also drew more largely in this way from Christ's treasury of grace and love. It was not great preaching, extraordinary powers, nor human learning, for in these he excelled not; but in love, meekness, and good will, in the spirit of Jesus, moving him to sympathize with all: entering into every one's sorrows, or sharing their joys, that drew around him so many, knitting their hearts with his own. It was that love which conquers self, draws us to seek the welfare of others, binding man to man, and the heart to God, which caused him so frequently to say, "He hath raised us up, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

This was his power, and it is this that touches our souls still. We feel that he entered into the full meaning of that sublime passage of St. John, making it the rule of his life: "Beloved, let us love one another, for God is love: and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love;" and also of St. Paul, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." It is the *love* of Christ, constraining men, which gives them power to move the hearts of others. When our Lord breathed on the disciples and said, "receive ye the Holy Ghost," it was the impartation of that grace which the humblest dis-

ciple might receive, and without which, the loftiest intellect would be but as a "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Too many judge of the merits of valuable preaching by the immediate effects produced; when they should remember that some are *sowing* while others are *reaping* gifts, some preparing the way of the Lord, or seeking the lost sheep of the house of Israel, while others guard and feed them. "Paul may plant, Apollos water, but God giveth the increase."

There are different gifts, but by the same Spirit, and all are equally necessary in the church. Elder Taylor, we think, happily combined these in one, to a great extent, as the history of his life shows. There was one excellency of his character and mind, however, surpassing all others, and that was, the power to gain and hold the confidence of his people. He retained the esteem and love of his friends with increasing interest during a ministry of forty years — and circumstanced, much of the time not the most favorably for this either — but the grace of God in lively exercise in the heart, is equal to every emergency of human life. Many draw around them enthusiastic admirers, for a moment, but like the meteor's flash, it dazzles the eye and passes away. But he, like the steady rays of the sun, continued to pour light and heat upon the souls around him; and if he was not so brilliant at first, he nevertheless did not afterwards dim and becloud with inconsistencies and cold formalities. He did not rush hastily on, without first considering the cost.

Indeed, he may have often failed here of doing much good by hesitating too long and not drawing the bow at a venture. Yet this prudence saved him, no doubt, from many a fatal extravagance and visionary extreme. But when he was sure that he was right, no one could throw his soul into the work more resolutely than he did. If he did not pounce upon you, like the eagle upon its prey, as do some reformers, he did not, however, leave you without lifting you up in your affections, encouraging you in spirit, and helping you forward in your course.

He was not so stationary in improvements, or so conservative in reforms, as to be behind the age and wants of the people. Nor, on the other hand, so fitful in his movements, or radical in his measures of reform, as to cut himself off from the sympathies of the masses; but progressive, elevating and reformatory. While his spirit and feelings linked with other hearts, yea, I may say, with the great heart of man, it made him a minister not to the few, but to the many, and rendered his influence regenerating and salutary.

Too many ministers have been backward in taking hold of the reforms of the day, such as temperance, peace, anti-slavery, and various moral reforms; but he, from the first, as these subjects came up, one after another, welcomed them to his heart, lived them in his life, and proclaimed them in his preaching. It was this spirit that led him to espouse so heartily the cause of seamen. He felt that man was God's child—his

brother. He, therefore, looked upon him as a brother, and as being the noblest workmanship of God's hand. On every human countenance, however bewildered in sin, debased by wrong, or covered with shame, he saw written in God's own hand-writing, "God's child — man's brother — angel's companion." Who, then, that sees, that feels, this glorious truth, can but yearn over the lost, as Joseph yearned in spirit towards his brethren? With these principles and sympathies deeply fixed in his soul, his benevolent labors were unceasing; yet unmixed with any desire of personal prominence or control. He had, what is not very common, no love of power, and at the same time a readiness on all fitting occasions to assume responsibility. All men trusted his perfect integrity; while his frank, sincere, native magnanimity, wherever he was, without his being conscious of it or others thinking of it, shamed away all unworthy judgments and suspicions. He was one of the men about whom there was no shadow of pretence. You knew that at the least he was all that he seemed to be, and that any new disclosures of character would be only a revelation of greater worth. This gave force to his public instructions. He was a deeply religious man; and when he spoke of God, of Christ, of human duty, his hearers knew that not a word was uttered by rote, that there was not a word, impressive as it might be, which had not a far deeper significance to himself than to them.

His style of preaching was rather historical and descriptive, than textual and methodical.

He, however, bestowed much thought on his subjects of discourse, collecting all the interesting facts and ideas relating to them, in his power. The directions of the Saviour to the apostles, "when brought before powers and magistrates, to take no thought beforehand what they should speak, neither to pre-meditate," he did not believe applied to preaching the gospel; but rather, that men ought to "study to show themselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of life; to meditate thereon, giving themselves wholly to them, that their profiting might appear unto all." He often prepared his sermons with care in his study, or on his way to his appointments, as circumstances might permit. Sometimes he wrote down the heads or leading points of his sermons and carried them into the pulpit; at others, he left them at home; and yet, at others, arranged them only in his mind. He never confined himself to his arrangements after rising to speak, but let his thoughts and feelings flow on in their natural and easy course, gathering strength and power as he proceeded, till his soul glowed as with the fires of inspiration.

He was not remarkably original, although enough so to be peculiar to himself. The scriptures were to him the grand reservoir of divine truth, and from which he opened streams of living water to many a thirsty spirit.

In the last part of his ministry, when his whole soul was drawn to the cause of seamen, he seemed filled with the liveliest faith and most joyful emotions in view of pious seamen becoming missionaries of the cross, and under

God, the happy instruments of the conversion of the world. To the very last, this thought was full of glorious encouragement to his hopeful spirit. One of his most affecting and glowing sermons, I am told, was drawn from the words, "Which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus."

His ministry was eminently useful. He saw not only many converted to Christ, baptized and walking in newness of life, but was the means of confirming the wavering, comforting the afflicted, and building up the cause of his Master in various ways. He was peculiarly calculated to aid and encourage young men in the ministry, and those commencing in the divine life. To many, in their spiritual life, he might justly be called "Father Taylor," as well as by the sailor, in his sea-faring life. His kind spirit, fatherly regard, and Christian example, were of great service to many hearts. It could not be said of him, as of a modern capitalist in our country, worth several millions, who, upon being asked why he did not have the biography of his life written, said, "My life has been a failure." Yet this very man attained the end for which he aimed — *wealth*; but, when too late to retrace his steps, found it to be an awful "*failure*" — a fatal mistake. How true then it is, that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance which he possesseth." How solemn the question, "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

In the Bethel, at Providence, a cenotaph is placed, with the following inscription:

TO

THE MEMORY

OF

ELDER BENJAMIN TAYLOR,

PASTOR OF THE BETHEL CHURCH

IN THIS CITY,

BORN IN BEVERLY, MASS., JULY 22D., 1786.
DIED IN SCHOOLCRAFT, MICH., SEPT. 24TH, 1848,
IN THE SIXTY-THIRD YEAR OF HIS AGE,
AND FORTIETH OF HIS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

A devoted servant of God.
A meek follower of Christ.
A true brother and minister of seamen.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this:
To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction,
and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

CHAPTER XI.

Letters from Elders E. Shaw—M. How—M. Fernald—Wm. Taylor—Bro. J. G. Loring—Extract from a sermon, by G. W. Kilton—Obituary notices.

The following letters are kindly furnished by brethren who had long known Elder Taylor, and been co-laborers with him in the gospel ministry.

Newburyport, Nov. 19, 1849.

Brother Edmunds: I learn with pleasure that an account of the life and labors of Eder Benjamin Taylor is soon to be put to the press, and that it has fallen to your lot to be the instrument of this valuable boon to the church and his numerous friends. A history of the life of a good man is always valuable; and especially is it of interest to see and read the account of the battles and victories, the labor and rest, the trials and deliverances of a consistent and unflinching pioneer in the great work of establishing a denomination of Christians in the nineteenth century. Such was the character and work of Elder Taylor. He entered the ministry when the Christian Connexion was in its formation state, identified himself with those who constituted the original elements of that community; took a prominent part in collecting, settling and organizing those elements, and died at his post in the great work of carrying forward and establishing the principles of the gospel, as inculcated by those with whom he first sacrificed the honors of the world to promote the glory of God.

You are not engaged in writing the biography of a perfect example, but the history of a good man. Elder Taylor was a man, not an angel; but he was a man worthy of high esteem; he earned a good reputation, and he enjoyed

it. The early sacrifice he made was great, and he never regretted it. The consistent course he kept was favorable, and he never forsook it. He commenced young, and held steadily on his way till he was old. He entered the war a ruddy youth, and took an honorable discharge when his head was white. He came tripping down from the mast-head, an agile young seaman, to enrol his name among the few who then constituted the ministry of the Christians; and here he stood and nobly battled for Christ, till, leaning upon the top of his staff, he slowly approached the grave of an old and faithful minister of Christ.

With many of the present generation, the history of Elder Taylor is best written upon the tablet of their own heart and memory. But all this will soon pass away, with the multitudes who so rapidly succeed each other in trying the realities of death, with the few exceptions contained in the brief sentences and statements of facts which will be dropped from time to time upon the ears of children by those parents who were familiar with the life and labors of Elder Taylor.

Therefore, your work of collecting, publishing and transmitting to posterity an account of these valuable labors, and of so unexceptionable a character, is praiseworthy, and deserving the countenance of your brethren. The book form will render it permanent,and a valuable volume to our literature. Biography is among the most acceptable and useful kinds of reading; and for the gospel minister, the life, trials, labors and victories of a successful fellow-worker are both a stimulant and cordial; an encouragement and a guide.

Such was the sterling integrity, the indomitable zeal, the unflinching perseverance, the regular morals, the soundness of doctrine, the victorious death of Elder Taylor, that his biography ought to be read by all.

When a man devotes his life to the promotion of the best interests of man, from green youth to gray old age; when he enters with great sacrifice, continues with consistency, and falls clad in the armor of a Christian soldier, that man is an example worthy of being held up before the world; and his life, or a sketch of his life, cannot fail to interest and profit all who read it. When Elder Taylor entered the ministry, his ministering associates were few,

his prospects of worldly profit or preferment small; his qualifications limited, his hindrances and discouragements numerous and great. But to bless the world and save souls, he commenced heartily, sacrificed willingly, preached faithfully, travelled on foot extensively, labored incessantly; received little and performed much; held fast while others faltered by the way; never yielded while others turned back; faithfully confessed while others denied their Lord; saw much fruit while others through desertion reaped the whirlwind; he held out to the end while others went back and walked no more with Christ.

Who does not love to contemplate the character of such a man? Who does not feel stimulated to Christian action thereby? If the life of ministers of the apostolic age, written by their contemporaries, serves this purpose and produces this effect, well may a similar work respecting one of our co-workers produce similar results.

A good man has fallen in Israel! Not as Absalom died, but with honors imperishable! These honors are not the empty praises of the lovers of heroic chieftains, nor the pompous eulogy heaped upon an actor whose whole life has added nothing to the rational joys of the world; but they are the grateful acknowledgements of the heart that gushes out with love, and speaks forth the truest sentiments of Christian affection.

Here let the memory of Elder Taylor be embalmed, while the historic page shall carry down his character and deeds and happy death, to encourage and bless generations yet to come. ELIJAH SHAW.

New Bedford, Nov. 28, 1849.

EDLER E. EDMUNDS:

Dear Brother,—I am pleased that it has fallen to the lot of one so well qualified as yourself to collect and publish for the promotion of truth, what may be deemed important or interesting in the Christian experience and ministerial labors of our deceased brother, Elder Benjamin Taylor. It was my privilege to become acquainted with him in the early part of my Christian life, and of his Christian ministry. He was at the time residing in Salem, but occasionally visited Haverhill, my native place, and

preached with acceptance to the Christian church on the Sabbath, and was highly useful in the church and prayer meetings holden in the week. No one who knew him doubted his deep and heart-felt piety. His uniformly humble, solemn and prayerful life taught us plainly that he had learned of Jesus how to live, and how to order his conversation aright, and how he might best glorify God, and be, not only an example to the flock, but instrumental of the greatest good to the church and world And this lesson of humility and spirituality that he learned so perfectly at the feet of Jesus, and which so beautifully marked the whole course of his life, was what gave him the hearts and confidence of the people.

Never have I seen a man who appeared more deeply to realize the great responsibilities resting upon a preacher of the gospel, nor one who felt himself more unworthy of so high and holy a calling. His dread of engaging in the work, and fear to neglect it, pressed heavily upon his mind, and rendered him an object of pity, and drew forth the deep sympathy and fervent prayers of those to whom he unbosomed his burdened soul. However, by the earnest entreaties and frequent encouragements held out by his brethren and friends, he was induced to yield to the impression of duty, and enter the field which was ripe and already to harvest; and soon became a successful laborer in the church and vineyard of the Lord. His labors in the early part of his ministry were devoted mostly to the spiritual improvement of the church; and there his labors were not in vain. Few persons had so great an influence over the backslider, and could so readily persuade him to return to his Father's house, "where is bread enough and to spare," as could that good man.

His spiritual views of church order and discipline, his ardent love for the people of his charge, and frequent calls upon them, his love of the children of his parish, and sympathy for the poor and afflicted, his pleasant and soothing words to the sick and dying, and his appropriate remarks in the house of mourning, made him, in my opinion, one of the best pastors in the whole circle of my acquaintance. Having made the Bible his principal study, he could readily refer to appropriate passages to prove, illustrate or enforce the truth upon the conscience and understanding of his

hearers. His sermons, though not of the highest order, were well arranged, and coming from a heart overflowing with love to God and man, and delivered, as they were, with much Christian zeal and deep solemnity, were not only listened to by an attentive congregation, but often felt by them "to be the power of God to the salvation of their souls."

Although the sufferings of Christ, his exalted character, his dignified titles, and the fulness of his salvation, were themes upon which he delighted to dwell, yet, his clear views of the evil of sin, the value of the soul, and the danger of losing it, led him in a most earnest, faithful and affectionate manner, and with many tears, to warn his people to flee the wrath to come, and to pray them in Christ's stead to seek, by repentance and faith, to become reconciled to God.

Having been a sailor, he had an experimental konwledge of the trials, sufferings, privations and temptations that are peculiar to that important class, whose home, for the most part, is on the ocean. His experience, and ardent love for the seamen, prepared him for extensive usefulness as a Bethel preacher; and I presume no one felt more, or labored harder for their temporal and spiritual welfare, than he did during his residence in Providence, and I doubt not but many a sailor will, in the morning of the resurrection, not only call him blessed, but be as stars in his future crown of rejoicing.

I do not remember of ever hearing him speak disrespectfully of any denomination. He had a heart and charity that could embrace, as Christians, all, of every name that lived a sober, righteous and godly life, and it was this Christian spirit, with his meek and humble life, as well as his preaching, which raised him so high in the estimation of the people, and endeared him to the saints of every name who knew him.

I think much of his wife and family, who no doubt feel they are deeply afflicted by his removal from this world. No man, as a husband and father, could be more kind and affectionate than was our departed brother. All that was in his power to do for their comfort and happiness was cheerfully done, and the removal of such a husband and father must be a great loss to the family. They feel it in

the supply of their wants, in the family circle, at the domestic board, at the altar of prayer, and in all the endearments, duties and cares growing out of their relations in life. But they are not left comfortless.

The highest object of his earthly hopes was accomplished — the Bethel was paid for. And the thought that "he was a good man, and feared God above many," and that he is released from all his trials and burdens on earth, and has gone to the rewards of a good and faithful servant in heaven, must, in a measure, reconcile them to his removal, before them, to his crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Yours in the strong bonds of Christian affection,

Moses How.

Kittery, Me., 1849.

Brother Edmunds: My correspondence with Brother Benjamin Taylor was in April, 1813. Soon after this I became personally and intimately acquainted with that spiritual and good man.

His views of conversion, of the ordinances, of the Christian life, public worship, church government, union and united efforts of Christians agreed so perfectly with my own, that in all our long acquaintance we never had the least controversy.

As we were both called from employment on the ocean, we could readily rehearse the mercy of God to us, and admire his wonderful condescension in calling such untutored, unqualified men to preach and build up his church on earth. Many weeping and heart-humbling seasons we enjoyed together, which bound us with cords of union and love; but he has outstripped me and got into port safe, with a rich freight with which his Master entrusted him. We were true brothers in Christ, and should age and tempests wreck my *hull*, or dismast me, I hope to be conducted by heaven's life-boat safe to port, with my little freight undamaged, there to join Benjamin in praising God and the Lamb eternally.

The disunion of Christians was painful and a grief to brother Taylor. Also Christians neglecting to enforce gospel discipline in the churches of Christ. He believed the testimony of Christ and his apostles an important and

sufficient rule or law to govern Christ's church by, without creeds, disciplines, or articles of faith planned by men. Brother Taylor was an able minister of Christ.

MARK FERNARD.

—

Schoolcraft, Mich., 1849.

BROTHER EDMUNDS:

When my brother returned to the west the last time, I was not only glad to see him, but hoped we might spend many happy days together yet on earth; but the moment I cast my eye upon him, I saw that the disease with which he died had marked him for the grave.

I had hoped, on hearing of his contemplated return to this country, that we might pleasantly together, at least up to three-score years and ten, spend the evening of our days; but alas! he returned only to bid us farewell, and die in the bosom of his friends. I was with him considerably in his sickness, and when he was able to ride, often rode out with him. His mind was for the most part calm. For one or two days, he spoke of being in darkness, but said, "he hoped his Heavenly Father would not leave him." He found relief, and his mind after this was calm, and his end peace.

In relation to my brother Benjamin and myself, I often think of such passages as these: "the elder shall serve the younger;" "the last shall be first and the first last." He, though younger than myself, experienced religion first, commenced preaching first, has finished his work, and I trust, gone to heaven first.

Yours very truly,

WILLIAM TAYLOR.

—

Boston, Nov., 1849.

BROTHER EDMUNDS: You wish me to write what my memory can furnish of any events in the life of the late Elder Benjamin Taylor. To gratify his numerous friends, and to perpetuate the memory of so excellent a man, you are now preparing to publish what you can learn of his life and self-denying labors, in a memoir. I am sorry I cannot give you some aid in so desirable a work, but really I know little or nothing which I think would be interesting to your readers in addition to what you already have.

My first acquaintance with, or knowledge of him, was about the time he gave himself up to follow what he believed to be a divine impression, directing him to preach the gospel to his fellow-man. He came to Boston, and made the house where I then boarded his home. I remember well his careful studying of the scriptures, his zealous exhortations, and fervent prayers. He related to me his early trials of mind, his voyages at sea, and adventures in foreign lands, and how he was led to submit and resolve to do the will of God.

He possessed a vigorous frame and strong muscular powers, and was ever ready to be employed in his hours of relaxation from study and other religious duties, in any kind of labor which he supposed would benefit those who needed this kind of assistance.

In his early efforts at preaching, he suffered much from want of mental culture, and that discipline which might have enabled him to control the rapid flow of his thoughts, and the swift utterance given to them. His voice was very strong and piercing, and his words and sentences were poured out with such power and rapidity as almost to overwhelm the hearer. This defect was in a great measure corrected in after life.

I think he spent several weeks in Boston, and its neighborhood, the Christian church here being then destitute of a pastor. I was much of the time in his company, in meeting, and at home, and he was sometimes my bed-fellow. In the hours of darkness, I have heard him repeating over long lists of scripture texts relating to subjects he had been studying, and thus endeavoring to fix them firmly in his mind. He strove with all his power to create a revival interest in the people with whom he labored, and though in a measure successful, he was not so in a degree that satisfied his own ardent desires.

He went, I think, to New Bedford, and for a time preached in that neighborhood. I wrote him frequently, and as often received letters from him ; these letters I have not now at hand. I remember one of them gave some account of his ordination, and of his views and feelings on that occasion.

Our correspondence and particular intimacy ceased after a time ; he married and located in Swansey. Once, while

he resided there, he was sent to represent that town in our legislature, and remained here for several weeks. At that time our church was again destitute of a pastor, and he rendered very important service, supplying our desk on the Sabbath, and doing all in his power to aid us.

I had but little communication with him after this time, excepting occasionally meeting with him in this city, and sometimes at other places. I visited him two or three times during the last years of his labors at the Bethel in Providence. I saw him a few days before his departure for the west, and his final release from labor and suffering. He was then much distressed for breath, and said but little; his mind appeared to be tranquil, and he hoped a season of rest would in a measure restore him. But it appears that his work was done; and he was soon laid low in the dust, and, as we hope and believe, has gone to enjoy the "saint's everlasting rest." JOHN G. LORING.

The following extract from a sermon preached by Elder Kilton to his own people, on the death of Elder Taylor, is much in point:

"It only remains, in completing the sketch I designed to give, to take a brief view of that lovely character which he has left for imitation.

The writer considered Elder Taylor to have been possessed of talents of the first order, especially talents adapted to the work of the ministry. As his education was limited, I shall not of course speak of him as a literary man, but I will venture the assertion, that his hearers were often more instructed in matters of philosophical research, than is usually the case in sermons of the most learned.

He had a philosophic, an inquiring mind, a strong memory; and the happy faculty of appropriating all his knowledge, and facts to illustrate, to enrich his discourses. It may be said of him most emphatically, that 'he was *mighty in the scriptures*.' He was familiar with all parts of the Bible; he enriched his sermons with many scripture facts and illustrations, and proved his doctrine with such an array from the *law and the testimony*, that the most sceptical stood before him convinced. His ideas and his language

flowed on like the clear and refreshing stream, and not unfrequently as he advanced, his eloquence would be like the *torrent* and the *water-fall*.

But in addition to these faculties, he possessed a deep interest in his subject, together with a strong sympathy for his hearers, which often caused him to speak as one inspired, while the tones of his strong, clear voice seemed almost unearthly, as one speaking from the heavenly world.

With these qualities, as a preacher of the gospel, he was, as we should suppose, truly popular; he had large congregations, composed of different classes of society. Preachers usually interest some particular class of minds while Elder Taylor had the power to interest and benefit *all*. The learned and the unlearned, the rich, the poor, the old and the young, waited upon his ministry with equal delight, and all claimed him as their favorite minister.

In relation to the qualities of his heart, and the virtues of his life, I cannot in this sketch speak at length, though it was here he shone the brightest. His character was not like a disproportioned edifice, of beauties and deformities standing side by side; but such a combination of virtues and excellencies as presented unusual symmetry and beauty. He united the sternest integrity with the kindest charity; great patience and forbearance with fervent zeal; unusual modesty and humility with great moral courage, the most exalted piety with a kind and faithful attention to his family and his pecuniary affairs. His piety was not fitful and unsteady, but burned with a constant flame. Though fervent in spirit, he was never fanatical, and though he manifested a proper respect for forms, yet he was never formal. But the crowning excellence of his character, was that Christian kindness and sympathy which seemed to control, and direct his whole life. This gave pathos and power to his public addresses, and a charm to his private conversation; this made him willing to make great pecuniary sacrifices (for he received but small compensation for his labors) in the cause of his Master; this led him most tenderly to encourage young converts and young preachers. And he was such a 'son of consolation,' such an angel of mercy in the sick room, and on funeral occasions, that his presence was solicited far and near. It was this 'good will to men,' that caused him to extend his

fellowship so widely toward other denominations, and to labor so ardently in the cause of temperance and other reforms of the day. This finally led him to consecrate all upon the altar, in the last seven years of his labor, for seamen in Providence.

Elder Taylor early embraced the principles of, and became identified with, the Christian Connexion, and was ever firm and unwavering in his attachment to the denomination. He may be regarded as a pioneer in our cause in New England; though he was not the first, he was connected with the first ministers and movements of our people. When some others spread disorderly and fanatical views and practices in the churches, he always stood firm against them; and when Elias Smith (who, from his talents and position, was looked up to as a leader,) embraced Universalism, he, like Moses of old, threw himself into the breach, he assisted the churches, encouraged and confirmed them in that 'dark and cloudy day.' And in the late '43 movement, which has spread so much disaster in our churches, Elder Taylor, like the strong oak deeply rooted by encountering many storms, remained unmoved.

But he has gone! Yet he shall be held in everlasting remembrance. The denomination, the ministers, the poor, the seamen, and more especially his family, have sustained a great loss, but the change to him, is unspeakable gain.

G. W. KILTON.

Bristol, Dec. 15, 1848."

The following, written by Rev. Mr. Hall, appeared at the time of Elder Taylor's death in the Providence Journal, a daily paper of that city:

OBITUARY. DIED IN SCHOOLCRAFT, MICHIGAN, SEPT. 24TH, ELDER BENJAMIN TAYLOR, LATE PASTOR OF THE MARINER'S CHURCH, OF THIS CITY.

A good man must not be suffered to pass from the world without a record of his worth. Of "Father Taylor" there are many records, and though nothing should be written, enough is known, and will remain, to keep him long in

grateful remembrance in this city. A more exact and complete notice than we can give, will probably be communicated to a paper of the Christian denomination, by one of his own brethren who officiated at his funeral. The present brief tribute is offered by one of a different denomination, who knew, honored, and loved him, but who would be restrained from any attempt at *eulogy*, if by nothing else, by the recollection of a humility and dignity combined, which always checked the utterance of praise in life, and should temper it in death.

We had no knowledge of Elder Taylor before he came to this place, and can give no facts of his early life. It was evident that his advantages of education had been very limited, but that a vigorous mind, and the strong common sense which is better than any other, had done much to supply the deficiency. He was a son of the sea, and if not born upon it, as we believe the "Father Taylor" of Boston was, had known much of its severe but useful discipline, was familiar with all its hardships, and felt the deepest interest in those who were exposed to its natural and moral perils. He knew men, and loved the sailor; and these, with his sound judgment and ready speech, his entire integrity and simplicity, his firm and gentle kindness, were excellent qualifications for the office of a Bethel minister. Whether he held that office before he came here, we do not know. He entered upon the work in this city in 1841; and we doubt if any minister among us has performed a greater amount of labor, in a seven years' ministry; we hope no one has received less in the way of pecuniary reward. His dependance for that was on the voluntary and variable contributions of his own hearers on the Sabbath; and those who remember their condition in life, and the return of these calls three times every week, will not suppose that he preached for gain. But preaching was the smallest part of his work, though by no means confined to the Sabbath. In hearing the last discourse which he gave to his Society, in which he hastily went over, and modestly summed up, the services and labors to which he had been called, we were surprised by the variety, and perfectly amazed at the amount. We had no difficulty in accounting for the breaking down of a strong frame, and the approaching end of so laborious a life.

The "Bethel meeting-house" was built in 1841. Though not small, it was soon respectably filled, a church was organized in May, 1842, consisting chiefly of sailors and their families, a Sunday school was begun and has been regularly sustained and well attended ever since, and a large temperance society was early formed in connection with the Bethel, which has proved more permanent and more wisely successful than some similar societies, consisting now of about 800 members. The Marine Hospital was considered by Mr. Taylor, as a part of his parochial care, to which he devoted himself laboriously, and we believe most judiciously and acceptably to all, without compensation, but not without personal charity and sacrifice. Near the Hospital, by his arduous perseverance, he procured at last a 'burial place' for the sailor, religiously consecrated and perpetually secured to that object. This is one of his monuments among us. And another, showing the confidence that was placed in him, is the fact, that the house in which he preached, built after he came, at an expense of four thousand dollars, for which the mariners themselves could raise but about 700—a large sum for them—has been gradually relieved of its debt by general subscriptions, and the mortgage entirely discharged in the very month that he was compelled by ill health to depart; so that the good man was blessed in his death, though far away, by the cheering assurance, that the Society for which he had so faithfully labored, was now completely established and free.

His death was happy. At the close of such a life, how could it be otherwise? He had toiled for man, as a servant of God, and a humble follower of Christ. The name of Christ he had taken, and wished to be known by no other. The Bible was his creed. The gospel was his law and doctrine. These, to the best of his humble ability and ever charitable judgment, he aimed to unfold and practically apply to all the interests of time, and the realities of eternity, and when death came, though with much suffering, he met it calmly, looking to the mercy of God and the mediation of Jesus Christ, and saying to those around him, "Do not weep, my dear children, I am happy, I am happy."

The following obituary notice, from the Christian Register, a religious paper of another denomination, shows very clearly the esteem and love others had for Elder Taylor, as well as his own people:

Elder Benjamin Taylor.—We see in the Palladium, we think for the first time, a notice of the death of this good man, which occurred on Sunday, the 24th of September last, in Schoolcraft, Michigan. He was for a short time pastor of the Pawtuxet St. (Christian) Church, in Providence, R. I., and for about seven years, of the Bethel church in the same city. To this last enterprise he gave all his soul and strength, and to him its establishment and success were greatly indebted. When through aid we believe contributed by the Unitarians of Providence, he saw the enterprise free from debt, while his own health meantime was fast failing, he remarked, "I have nothing more to do but to visit my children and die." A kind Providence gratified this wish of his heart. He rests from his labors. He was a minister of Christ well endowed for his office by nature and by grace; a man of faith and prayer and devotedness; intelligent, versed in the scriptures, sincere, catholic, conciliatory, upright, meek, patient, courageous, who belonged less to his "Connexion" than to the Church Universal. Such men as Elder Taylor we love and respect, and cherish their memory with affection, and hope to be permitted to greet and unite with them in the heavenly world.

CHAPTER XII.

The calling of seamen honorable—Their conversion—Their value to the world—Poetry—The doctrine of the Lord.

In closing this memoir, a few passages found on various scraps of paper left by our brother, are here inserted. Some are extracts which he copied because of their excellence, and the deep response which they found in his own spirit; others are thoughts of his own. In either case, however, they alike show the heart and sympathies of the man, and the themes which occupied his mind, and filled his soul with delightful contemplation:

THE CALLING OF SEAMEN HONORABLE.

"The example of Christ, in calling a part of his disciples from seafaring life, is truly encouraging to seamen. Not only did our Lord choose some of his apostles from following the sea, but the sea shore itself was often his resort—a vessel became his pulpit, and a seaport his residence. 'And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast.' The instance, likewise, of the Saviour being with the disciples in a ship, 'and there arose a great tempest in the sea—insomuch that the ship was covered with waves, and the disciples awoke him and said, Lord, save us, we perish; and he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm,'—should encourage seamen to expect and desire Christ to be with them at sea; having Christ in the vessel, they can smile at the storm.

"Consider here, for a moment, the history of those, who, while they were poor fishermen, were honored by the Lord of life and glory, in being called to be his disciples.

"Simon and Andrew, James and John, were brethren of two different families, and dwelt, together with their parents, in a village in the district of Galilee, at the northern extremity of a lake or sea. It is a large sea to them, and the towns that dot its coast, and the ships that skim its waters, are the world to them. Day by day they rise up to the contented exercise of their toil—to cast the net, to spread the sail. They are fishermen, and when successful, dispose of their draught in their native village, or neighboring towns, for the support of themselves and families.

"They are friends; they have joined themselves to each other in their humble profession, and agreed to share profit and loss, storm and calm together. Their boats contain all their wealth. Their fathers, perhaps, were fishermen before them, and they have no idea of a different life. The only changes which they calculate on, are the changes of the weather and the vicissitudes of their calling; and the only interruptions of the even course of their lives, to which they look forward, are the three annual journeys which they make at the periods of the solemn festival, to the city of Jerusalem.

"Look at them on the shore of their lake. Think not of them as apostles, as holy men; but look at them as they actually were, on the morning when you first hear of them in the gospels. They have been toiling all the night, and have caught nothing; and now, somewhat disheartened at their ill success, they are engaged in spreading their nets, washing them, and preparing them, as they hope, for a more fortunate expedition.

"Presently they are surrounded by an eager multitude; the great Teacher approaches, to whose instruction some of them, before, had listened. With his quiet demeanor but irresistible dignity, he draws nigh to the place where they are employed. He enters Simon's vessel and prays him to thrust out a little distance from the land; then he speaks to the multitude 'as never man spake.' Afterwards he bids Simon launch out further and let down his net 'on the right side of the ship;' then follows the miraculous draught of fishes; and then he and his partners, now filled

with wonder and awe, are called to quit their boats, and throw by their nets, and become fishers of men.

"And now what a change comes over their lives, dividing what was from what is to be! It was long before they themselves were aware how entire, and how stupendous it was. In a few years they are the principal actors in the most extraordinary event of recorded time.

"Home, kindred, country, are to be forsaken forever. Their nets may hang and bleach in the sun; their boats may rot piecemeal on the shore, for the owners of them are far away, sailing over seas to which that of Gennesareth is a pond; exciting whole cities and countries to wonder and tumult—'*turning the world upside down;*' answering before kings, imprisoned, persecuted, tortured; their whole lives a storm, and a greater one than ever swept over their lake. On the peaceful shores of that lake, even their bones may not rest. Their ashes are to be separated from the ashes of their kindred. Their blood is to be sprinkled on foreign soils; the headsman and executioner are to preside over their untimely obsequies.

"A few years more and the fame and the doctrine of these fishermen have gone into all the world. Magnificent churches are called by their names. Kingdoms adopt them for their tutelar saints; and the men who claim to succeed to the office of one of them rule for centuries over all the civilized kingdoms, (the Pope) with a despotic and overshadowing sway; and by the virtue of that claim give away a continent, a world, which, when their predecessor lived, was entirely unknown.

"History tells us of a fisherman of Sicily, who was raised to that island's throne; but who will compare that, or any earthly throne, to the twelve thrones which were set up over the twelve tribes of Israel? What is the king of Sicily to an apostle of Christ? A wonderful man has risen up in our own, as we call it, wonderful time, risen up from a moderate station to the empire of Europe; and yet the eight volumes which another wonderful man has written of that emperor's deeds and fortunes, have not preserved such a name for his hero as is secured by hardly more than eight lines, which tell us of those men who first fished for their living on the sea of Galilee, and then were called to be fishers of men and to become the apostles of Christ."

THE CONVERSION OF SEAMEN IS A SUBJECT OF PROPHECY.

"They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Lift up thine eyes round about and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together, and thine heart shall fear and be enlarged because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the strong wind which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distress. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad; so he bringeth them unto their deserved heaven."

"THE BLESSING AND VALUE OF CONVERTED SEAMEN

Is seen, not only in the case of the apostles already cited, but also in the fact that the first man who ever preached the gospel in modern times in India was a sailor. It was John Thomas who went to that country in 1786, and while in Calcutta, his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the people given to idolatry; then he preached Christ unto them. In 1792 he returned to England, and a few friends in Northampton gathered together to hear him tell what he had seen and done in India. Among that number was William Carey, since the great apostle of missions in the East. Carey was already imbued with the missionary spirit, and a small missionary society had been formed, but had not decided where to begin its work. Their minds were now directed to this place by this single circumstance. Mr. Carey now agreed to accompany Mr. Thomas back to the East, and in 1793 they sailed for 'India's coral strand.'

"The history of missions shows clearly how much seamen have done in introducing the gospel in heathen lands, and in overthrowing idolatry, especially in the South Sea Isles."

"Divine grace operating on the hearts of sailors proves there is nothing too hard for God. Witness the effects of the gospel on the hearts of Newton, Medley, Taylor, and others, whose language is, 'I obtained mercy of the Lord though the chief of sinners.'

WHAT WOULD BE THE RESULT IF SEAMEN WERE TO BECOME UNIVERSALLY PIOUS?

"It would be most glorious in every respect. Wherever they went, they would carry and proclaim the gospel of the grace of God. Every vessel would bear a treasure more precious than the wealth of the Indies—the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified Redeemer. The light of the gospel would soon shine in every dark corner of the earth. May we not hope for the arrival of such a period, and such a blessing? Yes, such a change will take place. God himself has declared it: 'I will pour my Spirit upon all flesh;'-and the promise secures to Christ, 'the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession—and that his kingdom and dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.' 'Then they shall see and flow together, and the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, and the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.' This may take place shortly; it may proceed with astonishing rapidity. God can overrule and set in motion a thousand influences at once, to accomplish his great purposes. 'O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.' Ps. 89: 9. God can employ the sailors for this end as he employed Peter, Andrew and James.

"It is estimated that there are three millions of seamen in the world; now suppose these men were to become pious and devoted Christians, what an influence they would exert over the entire face of the globe. Not an island, not a river, not a seaport, but would be penetrated with the gospel.

"Even if the one hundred and forty-four thousands of sailors in the United States were truly converted to God, and living disciples of Christ, what a glorious army of missionaries we should send out from these shores! The descent of the Holy Spirit upon Peter on the day of Pentecost is encouragement to pray and to labor for seamen."

PALESTINE.

"Blest land of Judea! thrice hallowed of song,
Where the holiest of memories pilgrim-like throng,
In the shade of thy palms, by the shores of thy sea,
On the hills of thy beauty, my heart is with thee,

With the eye of a spirit, I look on that shore,
Where pilgrim and prophet have lingered before,
With the glide of a spirit I traverse the sod,
Made bright by the steps of the angels of God.

Blue sea of the hills!—in my spirit, I hear
Thy waters, Gennesareth, chime on my ear;
Where the Lowly and Just with the people sat down,
And the spray on the dust of His sandals was thrown.

I tread where the TWELVE in their wayfaring trod:
I stand where they stood with the chosen of God—
Where His blessing was heard and His lessons were taught,
Where the blind were restored and the healing was wrought.

But what if my feet may not tread where He stood,
Nor my ears hear the dashing of Galilee's flood,
Nor my eyes see the cross which He bowed him to bear,
Nor my knees press Gethsemane's garden of prayer?

Yet loved of the Father, thy spirit is near
To the meek, and the lowly, and penitent here;
And the voice of thy love is the same even now,
As at Bethany's tomb or on Olivet's brow.

O, the outward hath gone!—but, in glory and power
The spirit surviveth the things of an hour;
Unchanged, undecaying, its Pentecost flame
On the heart's secret altar is burning the same!"

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD.

"My doctrine is not mine but his that sent me." The Holy Scriptures are the word of God, a revelation of his will. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine." * * * They teach,

1st. That there is but one God, the Father, Maker of heaven and earth. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; but to us there is one God the Father, of whom are all things." That the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour of men; that he "was with the Father before the foundation of the world," and that he "came into the world to save sinners;" that he made an atonement for sin, having "died for our sins according the Scriptures, was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," and ascended on high at "the right hand of the Father," where he "ever liveth to make intercession for us;" and that from thence, in the end of the world, he "will come again, the second time without sin unto salvation," to "raise the dead" and "judge the world in righteousness." That the Holy Spirit is the "Comforter" promised by Christ, which "reproves the world of sin of righteousness and of judgment," which "helpeth our infirmities," by which "holy men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost," and which was abundantly poured out on the day of Pentecost.

2d. That man is fearfully lost in sin, and must be converted, become regenerate and changed, or he cannot be saved: for "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," and "if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his;" but "if he be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things having passed away and behold all things become new;" he will therefore "walk in newness of life. That "repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," repentance for, and turning from, sin, receiving Christ by faith, giving our hearts to God, "obeying from the heart the form of doctrine delivered unto us," are conditions of salvation: and hence it is written that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in Christ's name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

3d. That the apostolic church, called the church of God,

the church of Christ, is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone:" built upon the Rock Christ Jesus, "against which the gates of hell shall not prevail;" and that all holy, regenerate souls are members thereof, "whose names are written in heaven."

4th. That the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are to be faithfully observed in the churches, even as our Lord commanded, saying, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned—baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And of the communion, "this do in remembrance of me—for as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come." This being the Lord's table and not man's, the Lord's people should come to it: even "all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth," for "this is the love of God that ye keep his commandments."

5th. That union and love among the disciples of Christ is both a duty and powerful means of recommending his religion in the world, even as our Lord prayed, "that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in Thee: that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me"—and "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another; a new commandment give I unto you that ye love one another," that "whoso doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my mother, sister and brother, for one is your Master even Christ, and all ye are brethren;" that to secure this, we must each seek for purity of heart, and holiness of life, being fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ.

6th. They also teach the "resurrection, of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust," a "judgment to come," that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,"—when the Saviour will separate between the righteous and the wicked, and will place the one upon his right hand, and the other upon his left, and declare the solemn sentence, "these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

APPENDIX.

Elder Jones being the first minister in New England who embraced and advocated the free principles of the Christian Connexion, it was thought a brief sketch of his life might be interesting to the readers of the preceding pages.

Elder Abner Jones was born in Royalton, Mass., April 28, 1772. When eight years of age, his father moved to Bridgwater, Windsor County, Vt. Here he experienced religion, when fourteen years of age, but made no open profession till some years after. He engaged in school teaching when 19 years old, and was accustomed to pray with his school. At the age of 21 he was baptized, and joined the Baptist Church. He, after this, studied medicine, and became a practising physician of considerable eminence; from which circumstance he was usually called Dr. Jones. He says, "during previous years, I often felt much of the time, that some day I should have to preach the gospel." He moved to Lyndon, Vt., in 1796, where he was very successful in the practice of medicine, and where he was also married. During the third year of his residence here, a powerful reformation broke out, which had a great effect on his mind. He says, "at length my impressions were so strong that I could not conceal them, and I never found relief until I came to the determination to do my duty, which was, first, to confess and forsake; secondly, to take up my testimony which I had laid down. My confession I made both public and private, at meetings, among my neighbors, and in my own family. This caused no small stir among the people. Some said one thing, and some another.

"The duty of preaching was now stronger on my mind than ever, and I knew not what to do. At times, I was greatly tried about sacrificing all my prospects of worldly gain, which were very considerable. At a certain time, when retired by

myself and inquiring of the Lord what I should do, this scripture came to me with great force, 'a man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men.' These words greatly calmed my mind. I now made a solemn vow to God that if he would open a door for me to preach, without any effort of my own, I would consider it as room made for me, and would go forward whenever the way opened. I said nothing to any one, that I might see if the Lord put it into the heart of any one to ask me to come and attend meeting with them.

"Not long after, I was called to attend a sick person, some distance, and while on the way thither, I fell into religious conversation with the man that came for me, whereupon he freely informed me that he had been much exercised in times past on religion, but that his neighbors all made light of these things, except one or two. He finally desired me to come and hold a meeting at his house. After some hesitation, I consented to do so on a certain Sabbath, in case I was not called away to attend the sick. When the day arrived, I had a number of sick to attend; I however visited them in the forenoon, and rode to the meeting in the afternoon. As I rode along, I prayed in spirit continually, that the Lord would decide the doubtful case that day, whether he had called me to preach or not. If he had not called me, I prayed to be confounded before the people, and that my mouth might be stopped; but on the other hand, if God had called me, that he would give me a message from heaven. While on the way thither, these words came to my mind, 'But they made light of it.' With the blessing of God, my mind was now raised above every trial and fear; notwithstanding I was about to attempt something very great, solemn, and to me, very new. My mind was very much drawn out on this subject, and God's Spirit was present, to aid and to bless, and it seemed to me that the people heard as for their lives."

Elder Jones commenced preaching in September, 1801, and gathered a small church the same year, in Lyndon, Vt. Another he organized at Bradford, Vt., in 1802; and a third, in Piermont and Haverhill, N. H., in 1803. A church also in Portsmouth, was gather a little later the same year, by Elias Smith.

Elder Jones had joined the Calvinist Baptists in 1793, and voluntarily withdrew in 1794, when he made the following declaration: "I receive the Bible as an all-sufficient rule of faith and practice." 2 Tim. 3 : 16. "I reject all articles and denominational names, as applied to the disciples of Christ, except that of Christian." Acts 11 : 26.

The southern branch of the Christian Connexion arose in 1793, chiefly within Virginia and North Carolina, among whom was Elder James O'Kelly. The eastern branch in New England, arose about 1800, through the instrumentality of Elder Jones. The third, or western branch, in Kentucky, arose about 1803, under the labors, chiefly of Elder Barton W. Stone.

Elder Jones ever believed firmly in the following summary of Christian doctrine: One God the Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of men, and the Holy Spirit, called the Holy Ghost, the Comforter promised by Christ; in the lost state of man in sin, and the only way of salvation, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and repentance towards God; in the necessity of the atonement, the forgiveness of sins, a change of heart, and holiness of life. He believed in the apostolic church, baptism, the communion of saints, the resurrection of the dead, a judgment to come, and in the second coming of Christ in the end of the world; the future blessedness of the righteous, and punishment of the wicked. A strong and living faith in these solemn truths, led him to preach with direct reference to the salvation of lost men, and made him, as he truly was, a flaming minister of Christ, an instrument under God, of turning many to righteousness. He was ordained in 1802, by the FREEWILL BAPTISTS, but did not feel free to join them.

In the spring of 1803, he preached in Portsmouth, N. H., and in July, in Boston. The following autumn, Elias Smith embraced these views, and in 1804 Elder Jones organized a church in Boston, and for a time, was its pastor. In 1807, he also gathered a church in Salem, and was settled over it as pastor for some years.

In 1813, he took charge of the Christian Church in Portsmouth, N. H., where Elder Elias Smith had preached. In 1814, owing to the exposure of Portsmouth to the British ships of war, and the continued alarms and dangers, he moved his family to Stratham, ten miles into the country, while he travelled and preached. In 1815, he moved to Hopkinton, N. H., and was pastor of the church for years there. This year the spotted fever raged fearfully, which called him into the practice of medicine again for a time. In 1821, he again settled with the church in Salem; and in the summer of 1829 he asked leave of absence to travel for some time west. It was granted, and in July we hear of him in Saratoga, N. Y. In Sept. he was very sick, and for weeks together his life was despaired of; but recovering, he visited and preached in

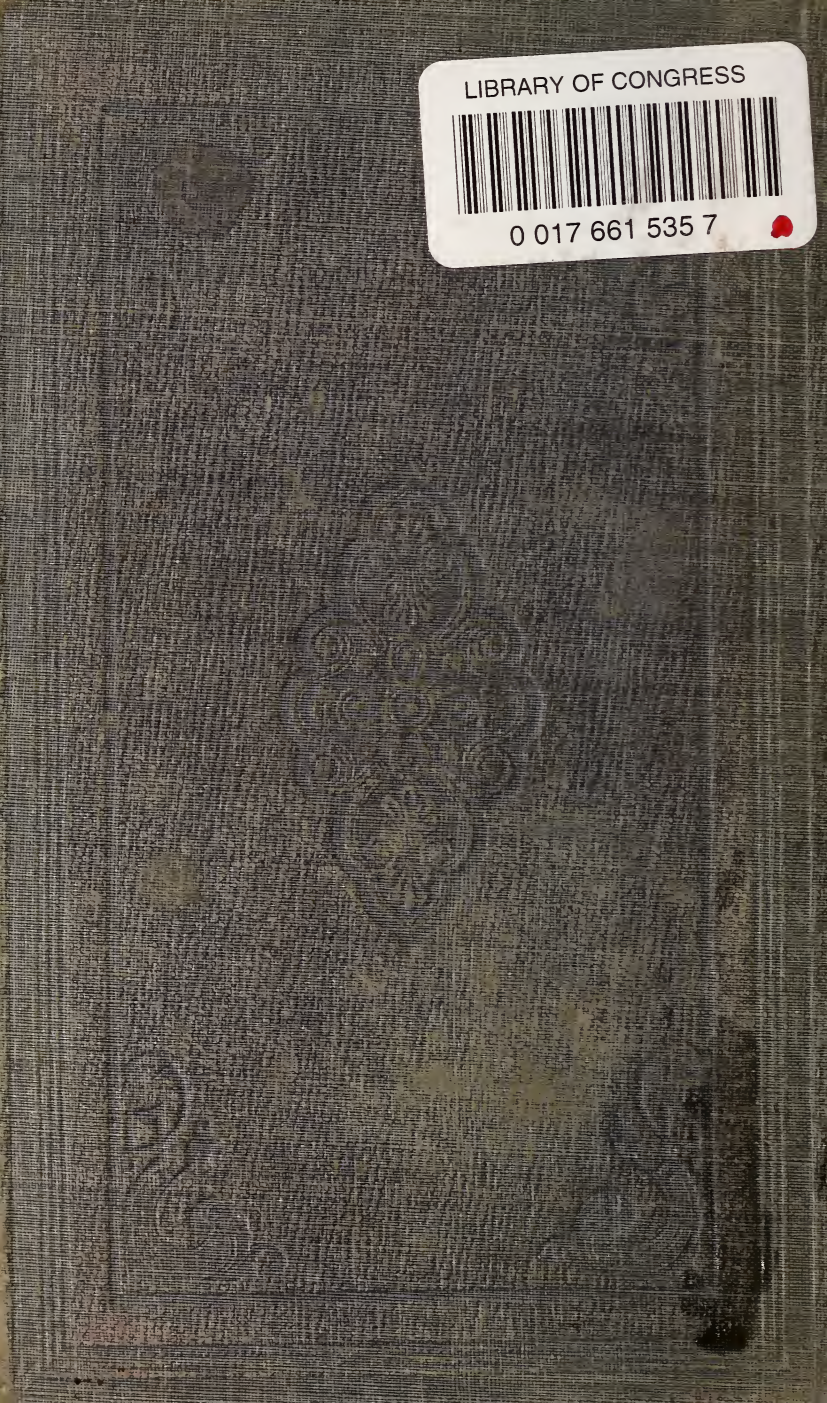
Dutchess county, N. Y., and remained there for some time. He intended, when he commenced this journey west, to have travelled into Ohio and Kentucky, but his sickness prevented. He finally resigned his charge of the church in Salem, Mass., and for a season took charge of the church in Milan, N. Y. In 1833, he returned to New England, and after travelling some time, was called to take charge of the church in Assonet, Mass. While there, he lost his wife, who died in the 67th year of her age. In 1837, he left Assonet, and travelled. Next he settled at Upton, Mass. In 1839, he married his second wife, and remained at Upton till 1840, when he purchased a pleasant homestead in Exeter, N. H. There he resided until his death, which occurred May 29, 1841, in the 70th year of his age. He desired Elder E. Shaw to preach at his funeral, which he did, to the joy and comfort of the mourning circle.

Elder Jones was a noble man, a sound preacher, a true and safe reformer, in early and middle life, a flaming herald of salvation, witnessing many glorious revivals of religion. He was most successful as an evangelist. His influence, his spirit, and the whole bearing of the man, was of a most salutary character. From the first to the last, he held firmly the great truths of revealed religion, not being "carried about with every wind of doctrine." He has left an unsullied reputation, an exalted pattern of self-sacrifice and devotion to God's cause. His example and influence live on to encourage and gladden the hearts of many who remember him still with unmingled joy, while others, following after, shall rise up to call him blessed.

10771

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper proces
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: April 2006

PreservationTechnologie
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATIO
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 017 661 535 7

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 017 661 535 7